

THE  
DISTRICT SCHOOL;

OR,

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

---

BY J. ORVILLE TAYLOR,

PROFESSOR OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN THE NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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Elementary schools bestow and sustain the nation's liberty.

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"The virtue of mankind, and the *knowledge* which invigorates that virtue and renders it more surely useful, are the greatest objects which benevolence can have in view"

*Dr. Brown*

THE THIRD EDITION.

PHILADELPHIA  
CAREY, LEA, AND BLANCHARD.

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1835.

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ENTERED according to the Act of Congress,  
*By J. Orville Taylor,*  
in the Office of the Clerk of the Southern District of New York

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STEREOTYPED BY L. JOHNSON,  
PHILADELPHIA









## RECOMMENDATIONS.

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*From W. A. Duer, LL.D., President of Columbia College,  
New York.*

At the request of Mr. J. Orville Taylor, I have examined his work entitled "The District School," and am of opinion that, both from its design and execution, it well deserves the patronage of the public, and the special notice and perusal of those engaged or interested in promoting general education.

W. A. DUER

Columbia College,  
New York, Sept. 25th, 1834. }

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*From Charles King, Esq., Editor of "The New York American."*

Having read the sheets of the above work, I concur fully in what is said of it by President Duer.

CHARLES KING.

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*From the Right Reverend Bishop Onderdonk, of the Protestant  
Episcopal Church in the State of New York.*

Mr. Taylor has done me the favour of putting into my hands a copy of his "District School." It being, however, at a period of more than ordinary pressure of official duty, I have been able to give it only a hasty and partial perusal. But I have been enabled to get such an insight into the nature and plan of the work as to satisfy me of its great value, and the probability of its being extensively useful to the important cause of general education. I therefore cheerfully concur in the above recommendations.

BENJAMIN T. ONDERDONK

*From Eliphalet Nott, D.D. LL.D., President of Union College,  
Schenectady.*

I know of no work so much wanted as the one Mr. Taylor has now furnished; and from its design I think it admirably fitted to improve elementary education.

ELIPHALET NOTT.

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*From J. M. Mathews, D.D., Chancellor of the New York  
University.*

Mr. Taylor's work on District Schools contains much that should be read and *pondered* by parents and teachers. It is written in a clear, vigorous style, is well arranged, and may be considered a valuable acquisition to the cause of elementary education.

J. M. MATHEWS.

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*From William L. Stone, Esq., Editor of the "Commercial  
Advertiser."*

After an examination of the "District School," I fully and cheerfully concur in the commendations bestowed above.

WILLIAM L. STONE.

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*From Nathan Bangs, D.D., Editor of the "Christian Advocate," &c.*

I have looked over Mr. Taylor's book on the importance of a well-digested system of elementary education. I am much pleased with his general plan, and the observations on the specific duties, qualifications, and responsibilities of parents, teachers, and all who have the care of children and youth. I cannot, therefore, but hope, that his book may have an extensive circulation and be attentively read by all classes of our fellow-citizens, and more especially that his good design and plan of instruction may be particularly exemplified in every section of our growing republic.

N. BANGS.

New York, Sept. 26th, 1834.

*From Reverend William Parkinson, A.M., Pastor of the First Baptist Church, New York.*

Having long regretted the evident defects in the usual management of our common schools, I have been highly gratified in looking over, though but hastily, the sheets of a book now in the press, entitled "District School," by J. Orville Taylor. In this book, the defects alluded to, with their causes and consequences, are justly brought to view, and the requisite changes, with their practicability and advantages, are explicitly stated and happily illustrated. So far, therefore, as I have had opportunity to examine Mr. Taylor's "District School," I cheerfully recommend it to the general reading and patronage of the American public, as a well-written work, and especially, to the careful attention of all parents, and of all teachers and trustees of schools, as, to them, peculiarly interesting and needful.

WILLIAM PARKINSON.

New York, Oct. 2d, 1834.

*From William M. Price, Esq., U. S. District Attorney.*

Mr. Taylor's "District School" is a book well adapted to the promotion of the desirable object which the writer has in view. I have great pleasure in commending this work to public patronage.

WILLIAM M. PRICE.

New-York, Oct. 8th, 1831.

J Orville Taylor has rendered the cause of *education* an invaluable service, by his work entitled "*The District School.*" His doctrines are sound, and with a very few exceptions, in my opinion, the means suggested for carrying them into operation, must find favour with all reflecting minds. If our fellow-citizens universally regard, and put in practice the lessons he has taught with such simplicity and force, they will lay deep and sure the foundations of private happiness, and public security. I would respectfully

commend the author, and his labours in this field of usefulness, to the notice of the governor, and the members of the legislature of Pennsylvania.

ROBERTS VAUX.

Philadelphia, 2d mo. 5, 1835.

If these principles be correct,—as every good citizen must admit they are,—then is this book, by Mr. J. O. Taylor, of vast importance to our community. Its aim and design are to further the progress of national education, on the best principles, and in the best practical manner. Its name, *The District School*, is humble and unassuming. But it is peculiarly attractive. It is by THE DISTRICT SCHOOL that the great mass of the people is to be illumined. Only let parents, teachers, and our legislators study this book, as it truly deserves to be studied, and a new impulse cannot fail to be given to our state and national education. And, thence, our republic will derive fresh nourishment, and strength, from the superior education of the rising generation.

The object, therefore, of Mr. Taylor's book cannot be sufficiently applauded. And we do not hesitate emphatically to say, that he has done ample justice to it. It exhibits a master's view of the best mode of attaining the end proposed by our schools, and a rich experience in the whole matter; and it is expressed in a clear and forcible style. We therefore beg leave earnestly to recommend his book to every parent, to every teacher, and to every legislator and patriot who study the best interests of our common country.

WILLIAM C. BROWNLEE, D.D.

"In teachers' seminaries, Taylor's 'District School' should be used as a reading-book, for the double purpose of improvement in reading the English language, and for becoming familiar with the most improved mode of instruction, and the best rules of school government."—*Report of a Committee of the Regents of the University of the State of New York on the Education of Common School Teachers, Albany, 1835.*

Paris, Dec. 30, 1834.

*Dear Sir*,—I have just finished a perusal of the excellent book—"The District School"—you have had the kindness to send to me. Its subject is one of the very highest importance; and you have treated it in a manner that evinces a close observation of the practice, as well as a profound knowledge of the principles and theory on which it is founded and your work is one of those which I think most calculated to produce extensive and permanent good.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON,

Letter to the author.

~ *Minister to France.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESS.

"We cannot bestow higher praise upon the District School, than by expressing the opinion that the cause of education would be greatly promoted by its general diffusion, and that it ought to be in the hands of every parent and teacher in this wide republic. \* \* \* We have been so copious in our extracts, that our readers are now prepared to form their own judgment of the very clever and useful work under consideration. It is with unfeigned pleasure that we learn from the preface, that to the cause of education our author has consecrated his talents, his attainments and his future life. The cause has gained much in acquiring so intelligent, skilful, and practical an advocate."—*Monthly Journal of Education, Princeton.*

"We have looked over this volume with uncommon interest. It is full of good thoughts and useful suggestions, on the importance of common schools, to a country like ours, on the defects which abound in them, and their sources, and on the means of improving and elevating them. Nor is it the least commendation of the work, that it breathes throughout a truly Christian spirit. The style is simple, intelligible, and forcible."—*American Annals of Education and Instruction, Boston.*

"The 'District School' is a volume of great value, both in its design and execution, and we sincerely commend this volume to all who desire that national education should with us be a truth, and not a mere statutory provision, rendered nugatory, if not mischievous, by the manner in which it is executed."—*New York American*, Sept. 27.

"This admirable volume, of which we have spoken before more than once, is now out, and we again commend it to general circulation."—*New York American*, Oct. 18, 1834.

"One of the most important works that have come from the press is the duodecimo (336 pages) entitled the 'District School,' by J. Orville Taylor. The improvement of elementary education is the purpose of the author, and he has followed it out in all the proper details, with the ability of an intelligent and most zealous observer."—*The National Gazette and Literary Register*.

"It is with sincere pleasure that we recommend the perusal of Mr. Taylor's book to parents, teachers, and especially to the trustees and superintendents of our schools. Every citizen should read it who values either the welfare of his own offspring, or the salvation of the republic."—*New York Observer*.

"The object of the 'District School' is most important—to raise the character of the district school by explaining the difficult but most useful and honourable duties of the schoolmaster, and the relative responsibilities of teachers, pupils, and parents. The nature and bearings of moral education form a prominent feature in the work. Such a volume has been long needed."—*The Churchman*.

"The 'District School' that we mentioned the other day is an admirable work on elementary education, and should be read by every parent and teacher in the Union."—*Albany Daily Advertiser*.

"The 'District School,' by J. Orville Taylor.—This is an instructive work, and a delightful one, too. The author has a high

sense of the ludicrous, a keen eye for defects; and he has observed so closely, and described so faithfully, that he has not only made an eminently useful book, but one full of amusement. The style is pure and perspicuous, and the thought always luminous, and frequently eloquent. \* \* \* With the most useful instructions, the author constantly unites either amusement of anecdote or the charm of poetical style and thought."—*The New York Mirror*.

"The style of the 'District School' is simple, intelligible, appropriate, correct, and forcible, and the author displays much acquaintance with the condition of common education. We regard the general circulation of this work as highly desirable, for it will carry to every reader a large amount of important truths, many sound views of education, and an incitement to exertion in its promotion, which must produce some good effects."—*New York Daily Advertiser*.

"No work which we have seen appears to be so well calculated for extensive effect on our schools, and it will be a public benefit to every state in the Union, if it is widely diffused and read in every town and village."—*Daily Advertiser*.

"We ask that this book, by Mr. Taylor, may be read by parents—first, carefully read, and well digested, and secondly, we recommend that every man and woman in this city may buy a copy thereof, and study it well. It is a duty that parents and teachers owe children and society."—*The United States Gazette*.

"The 'District School'—We most cheerfully recommend this book to our readers. It treats on the subject of elementary instruction, such as should be imparted in our common schools. It comes recommended by President Duer, and other distinguished individuals; but it is its own best recommendation, as it treats an important and deeply interesting subject with much ability, in a plain and forcible style."—*Christian Advocate and Journal*.

"Among all the books, essays, and pamphlets that have recently appeared on this most important subject, we have seen none that appears to us to combine so much of good common sense with true



philosophy. The work is evidently the result of sound sense, much experience, and careful thought, and ought to be seriously read and studied by every parent and teacher throughout the Union."—*Baptist Repository*.

"The 'District School.'—In this work Mr. Taylor displays great and accurate knowledge, and throws out a multitude of useful and judicious suggestions, in language singularly clear, succinct, and intelligible. His book is calculated to do much good, and we should rejoice to know that it was extensively read and its hints universally adopted."—*The New York Times*.

"We perceive that Mr. Taylor's work comes before the world under the auspices of high authority, with a list of names appended which justify a most exalted opinion of its merit and capacity for usefulness, and a testimonial of still greater weight, if possible, in a Preface, written by one whose ability to judge there can be no question, and whose high character is such, that the fact of his taking so much interest in the work is both a high compliment and the best certificate of excellence."—*New York Gazette and General Advertiser*.

"The 'District School' is addressed to parents, teachers, and legislators. The work is evidently the result of experience and close observation, and contains many valuable hints on the subject of which it treats, which are worthy of the attention of all in any way connected with the business or having the direction of the system of common school education. It is highly recommended, and can scarcely fail to command attention."—*Daily Albany Argus*.

"The writer of the 'District School' appears to possess a full knowledge of the important subject of education; and his remarks on the duties of parents, the qualification of teachers, school-discipline, the advantages of knowledge, &c., are distinguished by sound sense and weighty arguments. The style is pure and perspicuous, and the reasonings of the author eloquent and instructive."—*Saturday Evening Post*.

"The highest praise is due to Mr. Taylor for the clearness and simplicity of his statements and reasonings. there is no parade of learning, no assumption of profundity, but simply a plain and perfectly intelligible exposition of the thoughts and conclusions of a clear-headed man, who has taken pains to acquire knowledge of his subject."—*Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*.

"We have looked into this volume with no ordinary interest. It enters into the subject of practical education with the spirit and intelligence of one deeply solicitous for the welfare of the rising generation. Whatever can add to their dignity, as moral and social beings, and to the happiness of their country, is regarded by the author as claiming the attention of all those who have the direction of elementary instruction. His book appears to be the issue of a heartfelt concern for the improvement of our schools; and from the practical acquaintance which he manifests, and the good feeling in which he writes, his volume, we think, should be in the library of every family where there are children to be educated, and in the hands of every teacher."—*Providence Journal*.

"The subject ably discussed in the 'District School' is one of great importance to all—to parents, to children, to citizens as members of the community, and to the interest and stability of our republican government and institutions."—*Southern Religious Telegraph*.

"The 'District School.'—The topics treated of in this volume are of vital importance, the style in which they are treated is familiar, and the book should be thoroughly examined by parents, teachers, and all who are interested in the cause of freedom and education."—*Daily Atlas*.

"This is a work which recommends itself, and should be found in the hands of every person interested in the education of youth. The writer has indulged in no mysterious, metaphysical jargon. He has not committed the too common fault of stringing together words without meaning, nor attempted to lead the mind into the

visionary and boundless expanse of dreamy speculation; nor yet, to talk learned nonsense to mystify a subject, requiring to be illustrated by plain common sense. Though strictly philosophical, the positions assumed by Mr. Taylor are founded on the plainest facts, the correctness of which every intelligent mind will acknowledge without hesitation, and the arguments by which they are sustained, and the conclusions arrived at, are so perfectly simple as not be mistaken, and so extremely forcible as to defy contradiction. The 'District School' is precisely what it purports to be. It embraces every thing connected with the subject. It portrays the mind and character of a parent as it should be. It points out the mode of treatment indispensable, in order to make the infant mind the miniature resemblance of the well-cultivated and virtuous intellect of maturer years. It delineates the character and qualifications of the good teacher, and describes the manner in which he may rear up good scholars, and furnish society with good members. It also tells you of the opposite character, teaches you how to know him, and gives you the all-important reasons why you should avoid him. Nor is it the least important part of this work, that it imparts correct ideas of what *should be* the qualifications of school-committees, of the nature and extent of their important duties, of the high responsibility which rests upon them, and the manner in which they should discharge their trust. Finally, the 'District School' is a complete manual for parents, teachers, and school-committees, and we hail it as a work well calculated to produce a most beneficial result in the work of education, so highly essential to the peace and happiness of our country, and the safety of her constitution."—*Providence Republican Herald.*

The undersigned have examined, with peculiar satisfaction, a work entitled "The District School, by J. Orville Taylor." The work is not restricted to *common schools*, but treats of education upon a scale, which renders it equally instructive to all classes of citizens, and in our opinion a most desirable aid to all who are charged in any way with the instruction of the young. We are persuaded that the perusal of this treatise will work a reform in the prevailing systems of education. With this impression, we desire

to see it in the hands of every person, who feels either a Christian or philanthropic interest in the rising generation.

Signed,

E. W. BALDWIN, Pastor of Seventh Presbyterian Church,  
 GEO. BENEDICT, Pastor of the Union Baptist Church,  
 JAMES MILNOR, D.D., Rector of St. George's Church,  
 GARDINER SPRING, D. D., Pastor of Brick Presbyterian Church.  
 JOHN N. MCLEOD, Pastor of the Second Asso. Ref. Presbyterian  
 Church,  
 H. G. LUDLOW, Pastor of Eighth Presbyterian Church,  
 WM. R. WILLIAMS, Pastor of St. Philip's Church.  
 LOT JONES, Rector of Church of Epiphany,  
 THOMAS DE WITT, Pastor of Dutch Reformed Church,  
 J. F. SCHROEDER, Rector of Trinity Church,  
 CHARLES G. SOMERS, Pastor of South Baptist Church,  
 JOHN WOODBRIDGE, Pastor of Bowery Presbyterian Church,  
 JACOB BRODHEAD, D. D., Pastor of Broome-st Dutch Reformed  
 Church,  
 D. LANSING, D. D., Pastor of Free Third Presbyterian Church,  
 THEODORE WRIGHT, Pastor of African Church,  
 ERSKINE MASON, Pastor of Bleecker-st Presbyterian Church,  
 DANIEL DEVINNE, Methodist Episcopal,  
 L. P. BAYARD, Rector of St. Clement's Church,  
 T. McELROY, Pastor of Scotch Presbyterian Church,  
 THOMAS TYELL, D. D., Rector of Christ Church,  
 T. HOUSE TAYLOR, Rector of Grace Church,  
 GIDEON LEE, Ex-Mayor of the City of New York,  
 LAMBERT SUYDAM, Alderman,  
 JEREMIAH VANRENSSELLAER, M. D.,  
 HENRY J. ANDERSON, Professor in Columbia College.



## PREFACE

### TO THE THIRD EDITION.

IN preparing for the press the third edition of the "District School," I considered its popularity to be such as to make it a duty for me to rewrite the whole work. This I have done, rejecting some parts, condensing others, and adding much that is valuable in the form of notes, taken from several able and recent writers on the subject of education. I have also made an addition of two entire new chapters,—No. VII. advocating seminaries for teachers, and No. XIX. urging the study of natural history in our common schools. I have likewise, from the advice of many intelligent friends, divided the book into paragraphs, that it may be used in schools as a reading-class-book. Although three thousand copies of the District School have been sold in four months, it is sincerely hoped that the present improved edition will render the work still more acceptable and useful.

THE AUTHOR.





New York, Oct. 1st, 1834.

To JOHN DUER, Esq.

*Sir,*

Permit me to submit to your consideration the printed sheets of a work, which contains the results of some personal examination into our elementary schools. Should the work meet your approbation, suffer me to request you to confer a favour on the cause of general education, by contributing to the "District School" a short preface. Yours with high regard,

J. ORVILLE TAYLOR.

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*Sir,*—I have read your book with great pleasure; if the enclosed remarks will meet your views, they are at your service.

Yours with esteem,

JOHN DUER.

## PREFACE.

It is to parents, teachers, and legislators, that this work is addressed; and on the minds of those who will read it with the necessary attention it cannot fail to make a most salutary impression. The title is modest and unpretending; the style, though eminently clear and forcible, plain and unlaboured; and the subjects of which it treats, and well and ably treats, are of the very highest importance,—far more important than the topics which are usually discussed in our halls of legislation, and which, dignified by the eloquence of statesmen, and exag-



gerated by the arts of popular declaimers, have sometimes fixed the attention, and agitated the passions, of the whole community.

The reflections of the author are evidently the combined result of learning, experience, and extensive and accurate observation; and he writes with that earnest simplicity which is the never-failing proof of sincerity, and which, it may be hoped, will transfer to the minds of his readers a portion of his own generous and disinterested zeal,—his zeal in the cause of public improvement and general happiness,—the cause to which he has consecrated his talents, his attainments, and his future life.

Entertaining this sense of the value of his work, I have felt it a duty to comply with the request of the author by contributing this brief preface; nor have I been unwilling, I confess, to connect my name with a publication which, should its circulation be as extensive as it may, and ought to be, will mark an era in the history of public instruction.

To enforce the *duty* and *necessity* of extending to *all* the benefits of education, in the full and *true* sense of the term,—to *expose the defects* of the system of primary instruction which now prevails,—and to *suggest* some of the *appropriate remedies*, is the design of the work. On some of the subordinate topics of discussion differences of opinion may, and will exist; but all who are competent to judge, and will give their due attention to the facts which this book discloses, must unite in the conclusion, that our present system of popular education is radically defective.

It is 'on this point chiefly that the public mind requires to be disabused; it is in relation to this that there exists—I speak especially of this state—a very general delusion. We are told that under the fostering patronage of the government, more than half a million of children are taught in our common schools,—our pride, as citizens of the Empire State, is gratified, and we content ourselves with the general statement, omitting to inquire into the character and value of the instruction which is thus imparted.

We know not, for we care not to know, that it is in truth so imperfect and scanty as hardly to deserve the name even of elementary,—that it is unconnected with any thing resembling moral discipline or the formation of character,—that the teachers, inexperienced, transitory, snatched up for the occasion, are paid by salaries which hardly exceed the wages of the menial servant or the common labourer,—and that, as a necessary consequence, ignorant and disqualified, they are perhaps even overpaid by the pittance which they receive.

Yet it is in such schools and by such instructors that thirty-eight out of forty of the children of the nation are, as we phrase it, educated. We have lived in a pleasing delusion; but it is time we should awake. It is time that we should cease to boast of the superior intelligence of the American people, as compared with that of the population of the Old World; we must no longer refer to our common schools as furnishing at once the evidence and explanation of the asserted fact. It cannot be concealed, and ought not to be denied, that under one

of the most arbitrary governments of Europe, (despotic in its form, but in its present administration most enlightened and paternal,) the children of all, even of the meanest peasant in the kingdom, are receiving, in their village and parish schools, more varied and solid, and in every sense, valuable instruction, than any of our schools, I had almost said academies, are accustomed or competent to furnish! The fact is certain: what reflections must it suggest to the minds of Americans who truly honour and love their country and its institutions!\*

It is to parents and teachers, as already stated, that the exhortations of the author are principally directed, and it is from their voluntary exertions that he expects that reform, the necessity of which he has so clearly established. Looking to the models of Germany and France, no "system of public instruction" has yet been organized in any of the states, and in none has the appropriate work of legislation been more than commenced.

I do not hesitate to avow the belief, that without regulations far more extensive than have yet been introduced,—a control far more enlightened and constant than has yet been exercised,—and fiscal aid far more ample than has yet been afforded, it is vain

\* The admirable report of M. Cousin to the French government, "*On the State of Public Instruction in Prussia*," the publication of which has excited so lively an interest in Europe as well as in France, has been lately translated by Mrs. Austin, the authoress of the very best translation in the English language,—that of "*The Tour of a German Prince*." This report, together with the admirable preface of Mrs. Austin, ought without delay to be republished in this country.

to expect that the character of our common schools can be truly and permanently improved. It is conceded by all that nothing can be done without competent teachers, and such teachers, in the number, and of the qualifications required, we can never have, unless they are properly *trained*, and properly *examined*, and *watched*, and *controlled*, and, above all, properly *rewarded*.

Neither the districts, nor the towns, generally speaking, are willing or even able to select or reward such teachers, and still less to prepare them for their functions, and direct them in their labours. If good is to be done, we must bring our minds as soon as possible to the confession of the truth, that the education of the people, to be effectual, must here as elsewhere, to a great extent, be the work of the state; and that an expense, of which all should feel the necessity, and all will share the benefit, must, in a just proportion, be borne by all.

It is true that the public mind must be prepared for legislative action, and the belief of the value of that education which alone merits the name, must be far more pervading and serious than it now is, before legislatures will have either the inclination or the courage to act.

The dissemination of this book, and of the truths which it contains, will tend thus to prepare the public mind, to produce the right state of feeling and of thought; for assuredly it will not be read in vain by parents who are such in heart and in conscience, not in name merely.

There are some truths which it may be painful to

confess, yet are most necessary to be known. To the reflecting and the candid it will not seem extravagant to say that the chief source of the evils, the disorders, the crimes which afflict society, is to be found in the heartless indifference of the higher classes, the rich, the educated, the refined, towards the comfort and well-being of those they term or deem their inferiors; and their consequent neglect of the intellectual and moral improvement of those who always have been, and would seem by the order of Providence, always must be, the most numerous class—those who depend on their daily labour for their daily support.

It is this neglect, the alienation it produces, the ignorance it perpetuates, the vices it fosters, which leave marked the broad line of separation, on the one side, of which are the few, indolent, disdainful, proud, on the other the many, restless, envious, discontented. It is this which keeps the minds of a multitude in a constant state of irritation, and which, when the base demagogue seeks to array the poor against the rich, collects the crowd of his willing auditors, and arms him with his dreaded power.

It is this which caused the atrocities of the French Revolution, and which deepens and darkens the cloud that now hangs over England. It is this neglect—the grand crime of civilized and Christian society, which, in every country, sooner or later, and in none more certainly than in our own, if continued, is destined to meet a fearful retribution. Here most emphatically is it true, that the people must be raised to the level of their rights and duties,

must be made the safe depositaries of the power which they possess, or in the history of other republics we may read our own fate ;—first, lawless anarchy—next, the calm which fear and the bayonet produce—the calm of military despotism.

How then are these evils to be prevented?—this fate to be averted? I answer, all that is odious, all that is dangerous in the distinctions which the free acquisition and the lawful enjoyment of property must always create, will soon vanish, and all classes be united in the enduring bonds of sympathy and gratitude, when the rich (I include all who have the leisure or means to bestow) shall understand and feel that it is their paramount duty to improve the physical and elevate the moral condition of their fellow-beings, or, to express nearly the whole in one word—to educate the poor.

Let those on whom the burden ought to fall willingly assume—cheerfully sustain it, and there will be no further obstacle to the action of the legislature, no further difficulty in organizing a system effectual, permanent, universal. All that has been done in Prussia, and is about to be done in France, may be done here, and neither the patriot, the philanthropist, nor the Christian can desire more.

J. D.



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The reputation of this valuable work has augmented with each volume and the unanimous opinion of the press uttered from all quarters be true which in this instance happens to be the case it is indeed one of the best of publications. It should be in the possession of every intelligent man as it is a library in itself comprising an immense mass of lore upon almost every possible subject and in the cheapest possible form. —*N. Y. Mirror*



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# DISTRICT SCHOOL

## SECTION I.

### DUTIES OF PARENTS IN EDUCATING THEIR CHILDREN.

"If children," says a writer in the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, (No. XXIV.,) "provided their own education, and could be sensible of its importance to their happiness, it would be a *want*, and might be left to the natural demand and supply; but as it is provided by the parents, and paid for by those who do not profit by its results, it is a *duty*, and is therefore liable to be neglected."

"Art. 43. Every inhabitant who cannot, or will not, cause the needful instruction to be given to his children at home, is bound to send them to school from the age of five years.

"Art. 44. From that age no child shall omit going to school, nor absent himself from it for any length of time, unless under particular circumstances, and with the consent of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities."—*School Laws of Paris*, Part II. Title XII.

THERE has been much said and written on the duties of parents; and it is well that this subject has been so frequently and ably discussed, for there is none of greater importance. In what will now be said, there may be nothing new; and I shall feel satisfied in bringing to notice some of the duties which the most have frequently felt and performed. Many of the duties of parents, respecting their children's education, have heretofore been treated in too general a manner. We need not only to be reminded of our duties, but to be reminded of them in such a manner that we shall see and feel, and be assisted in doing them. Parents who educate their children in the district school have many duties pe-

culiar to themselves ; and they are such as have not been sufficiently enforced by former writers on this subject. It is my design to notice these more particularly, and to suit my remarks to those parents who possess only the means of the district school for the education of their children.

Many of these parents, not having been privileged with good schools, or leisure to attend such while they were young, do not so readily perceive the advantages of knowledge, and consequently are apt to neglect a better provision for their children's education. To such, particularly, we hope that what will be said may be both acceptable and useful.\*

The first duty which parents owe to their children is self-examination. Are you what you wish your children to be ? Have you that evenness of temper, that government over your own heart, thoughts, and actions which you would like to see in your children ? Have you that justice, industry, and frugality which you desire your children to possess ? Do you consider yourself at all times a proper example to your family ?

Such questions, or similar ones, should you put

\* " Persons of uncultivated and torpid minds are not aware to what an extent education can raise, enlarge, and stimulate the understanding ; in how great a measure it insures a person's happiness, and makes him both independent of the world, and a safe and peaceable member of society." Here and there we find an individual to whom strong good sense and a lively curiosity reveal the magnitude of his want, but a man has already got beyond the first rudeness and apathy of ignorance who longs for knowledge. Are, then, the rudeness and apathy of the fathers a reason for transmitting them unaltered to the children ? Or, to go higher, are the false notions, the useless acquirements, the imperfect instruction of the ill-educated of the wealthier sort, a reason that, because they are satisfied with themselves, an enlightened government should permit the same waste and destruction of moral and intellectual faculties to go on from generation to generation ?—*Foreign Quarterly Review*.

to yourself before you assume the responsible duties of forming the character of others. To educate your children, in the full sense of the term, is to *form their characters*,—to give them a character which will last, not only through time, but in eternity.

Parents are the natural guardians of their children. To you is committed the protection and education of those whom God has given you, and you will be accountable for the faithfulness or unfaithfulness in which you perform this duty. You have strong obligations and high duties to the community, to your country, and to your friends; but much stronger and infinitely higher ones to yourselves, your children, and your Creator. Parents may receive liberty and protection from government,—they may receive comforts and enjoyments from society, but from these sources they can obtain but little aid in the primal education of their children. This is a work which belongs to themselves exclusively.

But, from the *supposed* insensibility and incapacity of the child during the three or four first years of its existence, parents often neglect the education, or the formation of the character, at that early but susceptible age. Many parents seem not to observe, that the infant commences *an education* from the first moment of its existence. They see not that every look from its mother, every notice from its father, every animate and inanimate object which attracts its attention, every sound and tone of voice, and family circumstance, are forming a character in the child, and giving some kind of an education, either good or bad, which will influence the after-life.

Parents who do not perceive the wakeful attention and deep susceptibilities of early childhood, are not careful of their conduct when before their offspring, nor are they guarded in their expressions, and thus insensibly form a character in their children which after-instruction and good example will

never change. Parents should know the capacities of their children,—they should ascertain what passion or propensity is acquiring undue strength, and how far the child is capable of receiving wholesome restraint and moral instruction. They should see that circumstances, apparently fortuitous, often have great influence, if not carefully watched and diligently counteracted.

To the mother is committed the principal part of her children's education, till they are three or four years old. During this time she may stamp a character, which will remain through life. She may so moderate the passions, restrict the appetites, correct the desires, and obtain so firm a government over the mind and affections of the child, as to form the most decided character. After the child commences going to school, much of its time is spent with the parents.

The duties of parents are relieved by the teacher but a short time. Their watchfulness and care, at this period, when the child is meeting with new companions, new modes of government, and an increased number of objects, should be greater than before. Even if the privilege of a school be enjoyed, the education of the children belongs, in a great degree, to the parents. By the parents it must be commenced, carried forward, and completed.

Parents leave the education of their children too much with the schoolmaster. You appear to think, that providing your offspring with food and clothing is all that is required of you: the education, the formation of the character, you say, belongs to the teacher. This cannot be so. Your example, companions, opinions, and expressions, will unite with the teacher's instructions. You should, instead of trusting all to the teacher, co-operate with him, unite your labours with his, and ascertain the influence of the teacher and the influence of the school.



Do not speak unfavourably of the teacher before your children, but teach them to love the instructor and the school-room, and at all times to be obedient. If your children are under a good government at home, it will greatly aid the teacher in managing them at school ; but, if the government at home is bad, it will be difficult for the instructor to control their conduct, or establish any government over them during the school hours.

You often complain of the defective government of the teacher, yet do not perceive that the children at home are under no restraint. You, perhaps, have indulged them in every whim and desire ; subdued but few of their vicious inclinations ; suffered them to grow up disobedient and inattentive : and now, how can you expect the teacher to bring them under an orderly, respectful behaviour at school ? Do not find fault with the teacher till you have examined your own government, and ascertained how far you have fitted them for obeying or disobeying others.

In your family government, during the stated times you may appoint for instructing your children, during the leisure moments you may get from your labours, in all your conversation and in your daily walk, you should unite with your influence and instruction in aiding the teacher of your school. Let the studies of your children while at school be their principal business.

Do not send them to school one day, and keep them at home the next ;\* do not divert their minds in any manner ; at all times feeling that their education is the greatest duty you owe to them. Co-

\* The regular attendance at the school shall be an object of special control and the most active vigilance ; for this is the source from which flow all the advantages the school can produce. It would be very fortunate if parents and children were always willing of themselves to facilitate the measures adopted to secure regular attendance at the schools.—*Cousin's Report.*

operate with the teacher of your school, by furnishing the children with suitable books, and an appropriate school-room, well supplied with every necessary.

If your teacher is not qualified, you should counteract his bad influence and supply his defects. You should often visit the school and see its condition, and examine the progress of the children. Ascertain for yourselves the real qualifications of the teacher and the government of his school, and do not trust to the accounts your children may give of either ; and, at all times, let the school have your attention and your aid.

After your children have ended their school-days, you should still carry on their education. This you may do by providing them with periodical papers, with instructive and entertaining books, with the privileges of public lectures, and with your own experience and intelligent conversation. Strive to give your children a taste for knowledge, a love of home and study, and a relish for intellectual and moral improvement.

You should love knowledge yourself, and set a good example by the cultivation of your heart and mind. If you are not fond of reading, it is not likely that your children will be ; if you do not find pleasure in knowledge, your children will suppose it has no enjoyment for them. You should show them the necessity and the advantage of knowledge. Let them see the application of what they do know ; and let there always be an increased desire to know more.

Your own happiness may depend upon the education of your children. Why is it that so many young men consider home a burden ? Why do so many assemble in vicious places for amusement ? Why is company their ruin, and society a snare ? Because they have never been educated to the love

of knowledge ; because they have no pleasure in the society of intelligent and virtuous men.

If you wish to keep your children from the temptations of a wicked world, from its schools of iniquity and vice, opened in every place, let them have such an education that they will find pleasure in themselves. Let them not be dependent for happiness on the gratification of their senses ; let them not be fitted only for the company of the ignorant and the corrupted. The reason why young men are so prone to low and grovelling pleasures, is, their minds are not cultivated. A taste for useful knowledge would exclude the taste for dissipation ; and the gratification of mind would be cheaper as well as happier.

If children were taught to think, *and assisted in discovering materials for thought*, they would find a pleasure in the exercise of their rational faculties far superior to the gross pleasures of animal indulgence. If your children were taught to enjoy this pleasure, and were furnished the means of obtaining it, with books of an interesting and useful character, and with sensible and rational conversation,—home would be rendered attractive, and there would be no necessity of roving abroad in search of something to amuse them.

If they were trained to habits of reflection, they would not run into so many evils from mere thoughtlessness. If they were taught the value of useful knowledge, they would not waste their time in the perusal of those works of fiction with which the world is flooded, and which are so dangerous in their tendency : dangerous from the erroneous views they give of real life, the corrupt sentiments they often contain, and the fascinating attractions with which they surround vice and crime.

An expensive education is not necessary. It is such an education as you can give them in your district school, and at your own fire-side. If you will

begin early with your children, and teach them to think and inquire into the reason of things, you will find abundant means and materials within your reach for such mental cultivation as is here required.

A child that grows up in ignorance and in vicious habits is not only helpless, but hopeless. A child that grows up intelligent and virtuous will not only be happy, but will render all so within his influence. How delightful it must be for parents to see their offspring learned, cheerful, and happy in themselves, and increasing the happiness of all with whom they have intercourse!

But, O how painful to see their children ignorant, dissipated, and wretched within themselves, and wherever they go, blasting the happiness of others! They will be either the one or the other, in a great measure, according to the education you give them. Their characters are formed by education. There may be some natural difference in children, owing to a diversity of constitutional temperament; but it is believed that difference of early training makes the great distinction observable in after-life.

The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." And to the parent who neglects to fulfil this duty, Jehovah says, "Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children."

The education of your children, likewise, is a duty to your country. You are under the strongest obligations to prepare your offspring for becoming intelligent, useful citizens. A freeman must be an intelligent man; and this government, wise as it is, cannot make your children free, unless you first make them intelligent. You had better place your children in another land, where others will govern them, unless you prepare them for governing themselves.

But, as you intend them to be members of this

republic, which is based on intelligence, sustained by intelligence, and looks to virtue and intelligence for its protection and safeguard, you are under the most solemn obligations, if you love your country and value its blessings, to make your children intelligent. To permit a son unable to read to go to the polls, is as great an injury as you can do your country. It is, in fact, as far as his vote and influence go, as great a crime as you could commit towards these free institutions.

In a despotic government, ignorance is the best quality in the people, but a free government demands virtue and intelligence ; it cannot prosper, it cannot *exist*, without them. Then, if you desire the perpetuity of your liberties, the equal rights and privileges of these free institutions, and the honour and glory of your happy country, educate your children; fit them for enacting, administering, and obeying their own laws. Unless you do this, you are not your country's friend.\*

You are also bound, and bound by ties stronger than any other, to make your children happy. It is true, you love your children ; you wish them every blessing ; you would not see them suffer a single hour. Yes, you feel probably quite enough concerned as to what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. And it may be, that you feel sufficiently concerned to have them successful in the world, and prosperous in their temporal affairs.

\* The obligation of parents to send their children to school is of great antiquity in Prussia. The powerful and active superintendence exercised by the church over the education of the people, dates from the origin of protestantism, of which it is an inherent characteristic. It is evident that the authors of a revolution effected in the name of liberty of conscience must necessarily labour at the emancipation of the popular mind, and the diffusion of knowledge, as the only secure means of defending their cause and rooting it in the minds of the people.—*Cousin's Report*.

But food and clothing are not the extent of their wants. Neither will wealth or honour make them happy. Real enjoyment, true happiness, depend upon the mind ; and the mind is formed by education. Then, if you in the least neglect the cultivation of their minds and hearts, you cannot act the part of affectionate parents. You wish your children to be the companions of the wise and good ; but unless they are learned and moral, they will be unfit for such society.

You wish them happy whether in prosperity or adversity ; then prepare them, by a proper education, to find happiness within themselves. It is exercising the mind, and placing the affections on things worthy of the immortal soul, that will give them satisfaction. It is not sensual gratification that makes MAN happy, *it is thought and love.*

But you are not only to prepare your children for transacting the business of life, but to act upon and educate other immortal beings. Your children will have an influence upon others ; they are made for society, and cannot live alone : their influence will be felt by all with whom they have intercourse ; even when they shall not aim at exerting an influence upon others, it may not be less sensibly felt.

If their minds are so formed that they can be happy in themselves, they will contribute to the happiness of others ; but if their education has been such as to render them incapable of enjoyment, they will be continually destroying the peace and comfort of those around them ; yes, they will frequently do it by design, in order to gratify their selfish feelings : and they will do it without design—for being wretched, sympathy will make others miserable also.

If your children are trained up in the right way, they may do great good in the world ; but if not, they will destroy peace, and be promoters of discord

and confusion. If you neglect their expanding minds, they may obtain in the schools of vice a quickness of intellect, a plausibility of address, and thus gain an influence over the inexperienced and unthinking, and become but too successful in seducing them far from the paths of virtue, and plunging them into the vortex of dissipation and vice ; thus blasting the hopes of many an affectionate parent, and bringing destruction upon their own souls for time and eternity.

Such cases are common ; and they may be the cases of your own children if there is parental unfaithfulness. Your children, also, will be the educators, the formers of the character of their children ; and these again will educate those that follow after, till the good or evil consequences of what you are now doing shall spread far and wide, and go down to the end of time. No, the consequences will not stop there,—they will extend through eternity. How responsible your situation !

There is another consideration which should make you prize every privilege, and do all in your power to educate your children : it is this,—if they are ever useful and happy in after-life, it will be because they *obtained the power to be so when young*. When they have reached manhood, the character is formed, the education is completed, and the man will continue, with scarcely an exception, what he then is.

While your children are with you, under your government, they are laying the foundation of their future career ; and this foundation may be whatever you shall choose : if it is broad and deep, they may build upon it indefinitely ; if it is false, *they will get no other*. What you prepare them to be is their only preparation. In most cases, what manhood finds them when they leave your roof, the grave will find them when they leave the earth.

## SECTION II.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS.

I KNOW of nothing in which this government is so deficient as it is in well qualified teachers for her elementary schools. The two great things which are wanting in this country, are, competent teachers, and a disposition on the part of parents to pay such teachers a suitable compensation. I will speak of this disposition of parents in another place. The requisite qualifications of teachers are the subjects now before us.

In the first place I will mention some of the deficiencies of common school-teachers; and in the second place some of the qualifications which their office requires. I hope that I shall be excused for being plain; the good of all demands that I should be so.<sup>1</sup>

The people of the United States employ, annually, at least eighty thousand common-school instructors. There are in the twenty-four states not less than eighty thousand common schools, (we do not include the higher schools.)

Among these eighty thousand teachers, but a very

\* The schoolmaster who, from indolence, carelessness, or bad disposition, neglects his occupation, instructs badly, or uses his power without discernment, shall be admonished first by the inspector of the school, and then by the inspector of the circle. If he does not amend, he shall be reported to the provincial authorities, who, on sufficient evidence, shall impose, amongst other penalties, and according to the income of the delinquent, progressive pecuniary fines, which shall be added to the funds of the school. If reprimands, threats, and punishments have no effect, his employment shall be taken from him.—*Cousin's Report.*



few have made any preparation for their duties ; the most of them accidentally assume this office as a temporary employment. They seek it to fill up a vacant month or two, when they expect something else will offer far more lucrative and suitable to their wishes.

Many teach for a short time, that they may obtain a little money to assist them in a higher course of studies which they have commenced ; others make the business a mere stepping-stone to something which they consider far more honourable ; and some become schoolmasters because their health will not sustain an exposure to out-door weather, or, what is more frequently the case, because they suppose the labours of a teacher are not as rough and arduous as the winter-labours of a farm.

Having become teachers from motives like these, they have not thought of the responsibilities of their office ; they see not the fearful and momentous relations which they hold to the immortal souls committed to their care ; and can they discharge their duties faithfully and conscientiously, when ignorant of what they are doing ? They intend to teach but a short time, and therefore care nothing about making improvements in their method of instruction, or of becoming better qualified for their business.

They know that the unpleasant occupation will soon cease, and they do not wish to task their minds with it any more than is absolutely necessary. They probably have no love for the society of children, and in many cases have a decided dislike to any intercourse with them. They have associated with

\* The Germans give, as an instance of the low state of primary education in Royal Saxony, (the case is very different in the dutchies,) that the places of schoolmasters are there commonly filled by mere candidates of theology. In Scotland we should think this qualification very high.—*Preface to Cousin's Report.*

children but little, and are ignorant of the manner in which they learn. They know not how to sympathize with children, or how to please or interest them ; and they hope soon to be free from their stupidity and vexation, and shun all present intercourse as much as possible.

Many, not being able to discriminate between the different characters of their pupils, have one unchanging treatment for all: these meet with difficulties in pleasing the parents, or in governing the larger scholars, and then threaten, stamp, scold, and whip, and conclude by losing all government over themselves. They have no system, and nothing comes in the right time or place ; every thing is in confusion ; eight or ten noisy scholars vociferating for some privilege or information at the same time.

This throws them into a passion, and they sputter about without accomplishing any thing, or producing any order. Their patience is soon lost, and the irritability of their temper is worked off on some unlucky urchin who happens to be in the direction of their wrath.

What I have said is not from the imagination. I have seen many such scenes ; and so, either with high glee or trembling fear, has many a school-boy. Many, many instructors also are ignorant of what they are expected to teach ; they became teachers that they might learn,—not to teach others. Many take this office that they may acquire that knowledge which they now begin to feel the want of, but which was regarded as useless when they idled away their school-days.

They feel the necessity of becoming the *learner*; but to save the profession of ignorance, and the disgrace of their advanced age, they assume the name and office of *instructor*. Their labour to acquire knowledge prevents them from attending to the children. The teacher's attainments are suspected,

and being measured by the acquisitions of some of the more advanced scholars, they are frequently seen to suffer from the comparison; this makes the teacher either embarrassed or arrogant, and therefore impatient or techy.

These are some of the defects of many of our common school teachers. Much more might be said in the way of finding fault, but I have neither space nor inclination to pursue this unpleasant task. One mend-fault is worth ten find-faults, all the world over. I will now, in the second place, mention some of the qualifications which every teacher should have; and from these, others, which I may not notice, may be inferred.

In the first place, teachers should well consider the *nature of their business*. You are now acting upon mind—mind that is young and flexible. Your example, your opinions, your address, are to form in your pupils such characters as will make them either useful and happy, or useless and miserable. You are acting upon minds which will act upon other minds, and your whole influence will go towards the formation of the character of society. You should, then, consider well the nature of your business. You should examine yourselves, and see if you are prepared for an office at once so honourable, influential, and responsible.

It will be necessary for you to examine your acquirements, for you should *thoroughly understand* the branches you will be expected to teach. The improvement of the scholars is your whole duty.

\* Let solidity, rather than extent, be aimed at in the course of instruction. The young masters must know a few things fundamentally, rather than many things superficially. The steady continuous labour which must be gone through to know any thing, whatsoever, thoroughly, is an admirable discipline for the mind. Besides, nothing is so prolific as one thing well known; it is an excellent starting point for a thousand others.—*Cousin's Report*.

You cannot, while an instructor, attend to the improvement of yourself, especially in those branches of knowledge which you are teaching your scholars. You cannot give what you have not; and you will not be able to teach others; unless you have first learned yourself. Before you commence the duties of instructing, you should have a thorough knowledge of the studies usually pursued in common schools.

*You should be a good reader.* The grace, beauty, and expression of this art cannot be taught by oratorical rules, nor by the machinery of punctuation. The feeling, and the force of reading, your pupils must learn from your example. By reading with that tone of voice which the sentiment demands, and with correct emphasis, you will be able to make a passage intelligible to your younger pupils, which you could not do by verbal definition or ingenious illustration.

To read well, is to produce all the effect the sentiment is capable of doing. It is not, as many teachers would lead their scholars to suppose, the punctilious observance of pauses, the certain rise and fall of voice at the commencement and termination of every period, the continuous loud explosions of the high tones, or all these, that make agreeable or affecting reading. Yet we would think that many teachers supposed it was, from the manner they permit or teach their scholars to read.

How many disagreeable, powerless readers, either from the carelessness or the ignorance of teachers! Teachers should perceive that punctuation is entirely artificial, and that it is impossible for it to graduate the reading as the sense would direct. You should practically believe, that nothing can make your scholars read well but a full *understanding*, and a deep, adequate *feeling*, of what they utter. You should be able to convince them of this by your own

correct, impressive reading. By your own reading, compel their minds to know, and believe, that a book has *ideas*,—that it contains something which they do not know, but which they may comprehend, and make their own.

Your scholars, from the manner they are taught, suppose that reading well consists in nothing else than in correctness and facility in pronouncing words. The meaning they do not get themselves, nor do they pretend to give it to others. Now, you should correct this ; you should read as if your mind saw something, and as if you wished to show it to them—as if their minds were to attend to the *thought*, and not to the words, and stops, and manner.

Show them that the same sentiment may produce a variety of dissimilar ideas and feelings, according to the way in which it is read ; and at all times, produce in them the conviction that good reading *is to make the hearers feel and perceive all that the author felt and perceived*. Now, unless you read well yourself, you will not be able to teach your pupils to read in this manner.

If you read with an unnatural tone, with false emphasis and cadence, without distinct articulation, without intending to communicate any meaning, or with bad pronunciation, or with hesitation, or stammering, or indistinct rapidity, or in a careless, awkward position and manner, your scholars will do the same: and on the other hand, if you read with grace, with feeling, with intelligence, and with a voice pitched in harmony with the sense, your scholars will be likely to read in the same style.

After all your instruction, and with the help of all the rules they can learn, your pupils will be sure to get into bad habits, unless your own example of good reading prevents them. I would say it then, again, let every teacher be a good reader.

I have dwelt at some length on this qualification

in a teacher, from its vast importance. A child, or a youth, is liable at all times to be called upon to read ; it is a little service, which all in good courtesy expect from each other, and we may be asked to render it by the family fireside, or in the drawing-room ; in the private circle, or at the public meeting ; at all times, and in every variety of circumstances ; now, to amuse the cheerful, and now to instruct the thoughtful ; now, before the learned, and now before the unlearned. Then, let what is always expected, and may be called for at any time, have every attention from the teacher, and the highest regard from the scholar.

A teacher should be a *good penman*. He should write a round, smooth, free hand, yet one that is bold and rapid. You may compel the scholars to hold the pen correctly—you may keep them in a proper position—you may enforce a good degree of attention to their pen and marks ; but after all this, unless you can present them a good copy for imitation, your labours will be in vain. It is not by being *told* what is good, but it is by *seeing* it, that will make scholars improve in writing ; *or in almost any thing else*. Then, to be a teacher, you should be a good penman, and know how to make others excel you.

You should be *ready and accurate in the science of arithmetic*. Your ability to make the scholars perform the most obvious examples, or understand the most simple rule, will be in proportion to the knowledge you have of the whole science. You cannot be an instructive teacher, one that will make the thing simple and easy, except you have studied the science sufficiently to see something of its nature and application. In the science of numbers and quantity, each step teaches and illustrates the succeeding step.

A man should be a good arithmetician to be a good teacher even in the simple rule of addition. You

should be so familiar with this science, that you will know how the mind acquires this knowledge. You should be able to perceive at once, whether or not the pupil understands the rules of the book, or your own instructions. You should know when the pupil can help himself, and also when he needs help.

You should be able to show the reasons for the rules; and, what is of the utmost importance, *to be able to make a practical use of the knowledge that is obtained from the book, and the examples, which are done out in the school-room.* You should be able to bring the business of the active world into the exercises of the school, and make the children apply their rules and knowledge to this practical work. Let your pupils carry the same arithmetic into the transactions of life that they used in the school-room.

Do not let them be obliged (as they are in many cases at present) to learn a practical science of numbers, after they have uselessly spent years in trying to understand that of the school-room. If you have a thorough knowledge of arithmetic, you can make the science easy and practical to your pupils; but if you are ignorant of the science, the study of it will be unpleasant and unintelligible to those under your direction.

You should be *familiar with geography.* The usual manner of pursuing this study is this: the teacher takes the book or the map in his hand, and hears the pupil recite that which has just been committed to memory, without annexing any remarks, to assist the scholar in forming a true conception of the object or place which the lesson has described. From the want of proper direction and suitable illustrations, the pupil does not understand the nature of the study, and consequently makes it a mere recitation from the memory, as if it was moral or intellectual knowledge.

The teacher should be able to show the use of maps, and the mode in which they represent the earth and its various divisions, natural and artificial. You should be qualified to teach the pupils the art of drawing maps, in an easy, attractive manner. You should be familiar with every part of the study, so that you may direct the pupil's search after any place without the least hesitation.

It is frequently the case that teachers, from being strangers to the study, spend a large portion of their school hours in finding places for the class in geography; and not being successful in their blind search, they are obliged to cover their ignorance by saying, that "the place is not put down on the map."

You should be so well acquainted with this delightful branch of knowledge, as to be able to give every part that charm and interest to the young and inquiring mind, which will urge it on with an increased desire and application. If you are well acquainted with geography, this may be done; and unless you are, *learning* it is your duty, not *teaching* it; and it is not a proper time to learn when you are expected to instruct.

You should have a *thorough knowledge of the grammar and philosophy of the English language*. This science is miserably taught in our district schools, and one principal reason is, a large number of the teachers know but little or nothing about it, or, at least, about the best method of teaching it. Your pupils usually have a great dislike to grammar, for they see neither sense nor rhyme in it.

You require them to commit to memory a set of words which are entirely new to them,—a string of technical terms, which neither yourself nor the book defines; and this is usually the amount of knowledge which the pupils obtain. The time that is uselessly spent in the study of grammar is long and tedious.



The benefit which the scholars derive is nothing, or next to nothing.

The whole of this evil arises from the teacher's ignorance of the science, or from his bad method of teaching it. Now every teacher should readily and correctly see the facts and phenomena of the language ; he should understand its genius and philosophy, and be intimate with its forms and constructions. There are rules and principles in this science, which are fixed and simple ; and these the teacher should perceive distinctly, and be able to apply them to whatever form the language may present.

The most simple parts of this science should be taught first ; such as the definitions of the several parts of speech. These definitions the teacher must be able to simplify and vary, so as to make them intelligible to the scholars. You should ascertain whether they understand them, by requiring the pupils to pick out the thing defined, by the aid of the definition.

That a teacher should be a good grammarian is of the utmost importance ; for we should value that most which we have the most frequent occasion to use. And what is there that we employ so often as language ? All must use it. It is the great instrument by which mind acts upon mind ; and this action will be faithful or unfaithful, weak or powerful, according to the perfection or imperfection of this instrument.

What part of human learning can there be, then, so desirable as a thorough knowledge of this instrument by which mind acts upon mind, that we may at all times make the best possible use of it. Teachers should make the grammar of the language an interesting and important study ; but before they can do this, they must be well versed in it themselves. Again, then, we would say, that a knowledge of grammar, an acquaintance with the philosophy of the

language, and the ability to teach it, are *essential qualifications* in a teacher.

Teachers should likewise be well versed in history, especially that of the United States. This will qualify you to select such parts as will be useful to the scholars, and to present to their minds the importance of the subject. If you are pleased and familiar with history, you make it an intensely interesting study in your school. Every American youth should know the history and present condition of his country; but more especially should every *teacher* of American youth.\*

But you may be well acquainted with these branches, and yet not prepared to teach. There are many things absolutely necessary for a teacher besides knowledge. To teach is to *impart* knowledge to *others*; and you need the power of *imparting* as much as you do the knowledge itself. A teacher should be able to communicate his ideas to others with ease and perspicuity. Your success will depend in a great measure on this power; if you have it not, all the learning of the ancients and moderns will not fit you for a *teacher*.

Yet you should remember that this faculty of communicating to others what we know is mostly an acquired one, and may be had, to a great degree, by all who seek it. This qualification, which is of such immense importance, is possessed but by a very few teachers. There are many more of those who have the necessary knowledge, than of those who have the capabilities to teach it.

The power of telling what they have heard or have

\* The common school teacher should also be well acquainted with drawing, book-keeping, geometry, trigonometry, mensuration, and surveying; natural philosophy, and the elements of astronomy; chemistry, and mineralogy; the constitution of the United States, the duties of public officers, and moral and intellectual philosophy.

been reading; the faculty of communicating their ideas to others in an easy, clear, perspicuous manner, but very few have, whether educated in the district school, the college, or the professional seminary. This great defect (worse, I was about to say, than ignorance itself, for it makes us assume the appearance of being very learned, when in reality we can think or tell but very little) proceeds from the bad systems of instruction.

Teachers, with other students, are made mere reservoirs, into which a little learning is poured, but from which there is no outlet; or if there should be one, it is not a pure flowing stream, but an ill-seeming, struggling leak. The little that oozes out is a disgrace to the fountain, and a disappointment to reasonable expectations. We should make the knowledge which we *merely look at, and pass by, a part of our own minds*; it should be incorporated with, and become a part of our intellectual existence.

Then, if we have the organs of speech, and a motive, there will be neither hesitation, nor stammering, nor circumlocution, nor words without meaning. If we have an idea, we can impart it. We deceive ourselves when we apologize for our faulty expressions, by saying, "I know well enough, but I can't tell it." The fact is, we do not know; if we did, there never would be an occasion for such an apology. Now it will not do for teachers to make this confession to their pupils, and therefore they are obliged to say something; but you should know that it is easy to talk about *every thing* and yet say *nothing*.

There is no class of men in society who need this faculty of communicating knowledge so much as teachers; especially *common school teachers*. They are acting upon minds which are extremely limited; having but a very few ideas, and almost entirely unacquainted with the relations of things.

They cannot get the meaning by hints, and inferences, and equivocal, half-expressions, as more mature minds may do by close attention, and with some knowledge of the speaker's phraseology.

No, you must speak the whole of it to children, with nothing more nor less, and in their own idiom. *In an audience of children, you have not intelligent minds to supply the want of intelligence; all that is perceived by them must be contained in the teacher's communication.* It will now be acknowledged that teachers, more than any other class of men, need the faculty of transferring into other minds what may be worthy of existing in their own.

A teacher should make it his unceasing study to acquire this power. He may obtain it by practice. If he will arrange his ideas, and connect them with proper words, and frequently express them, he will soon acquire the ability. And it will make a new man of any one; *he will then feel and know his strength.*

\* Says Francis Leiber, LL.D., in his Girard Report,—a work of great merit, and one that shows this distinguished gentleman to be well acquainted with the principles and practice of education,—“We speak a hundred times before we write once, and though exercises, which perfect us in writing correctly and tastefully, cultivate also, in a degree, our speaking, yet there remains a vast difference between the free and cultivated use of the ‘breathing word,’ and that of the pen; it has, therefore, always appeared to me, that the art of speaking well, not only on solemn occasions, by way of oratory, but on all the many occasions created by the intercourse of men, ought to form a predominant object in every sound education.

“A person may write correctly and concisely; may express his ideas in a perspicuous and pleasing order on paper, and yet be unfit to relate properly even a short anecdote. That this art of speaking well is important every where, will be denied by no one, as soon as attention is directed to the subject; but in a country like ours, where so much business is transacted, so many affairs are treated in an oral way, it

## SECTION III.

## QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS CONTINUED.

A TEACHER, besides possessing the requisite attainments, and the ability of communicating them to others, should have *a good moral character*. His morals will be the standard by which the

becomes peculiarly important. It would be the soundest, and in my opinion, the only preparation for the art of debating, and rhetoric in general.

“In Asia the art of relating is actually taught, and we ought not to hesitate to adopt whatever is good, even from that quarter. So much is the art neglected with Europeans and their descendants, that I find in the regulations of a large orphan asylum in Berlin, the prescription, that the boys should be taught to do errands well.

“Strange as this may seem, who has not had manifold opportunities of observing that even this low degree of the art of expressing is rarely well understood? Were the art of expressing ourselves generally considered as indispensable, it would not have been necessary to single out this humble part of it. Let us observe, farther, how few persons are able to relate clearly and agreeably a simple incident, or every-day occurrence, to converse well, to give testimony in a court, &c.

“I have given my views on this subject fully, in an article on *conversation*, which I wrote for the *Encyclopædia Americanæ*. As a good handwriting is accessory, but not unessential to the act of expressing ourselves in writing, so is a correct and pleasing pronunciation, and a well modulated voice no unimportant accessory to the art of expressing ourselves orally: in fact, however desirable a good handwriting may be, and I consider it of no mean importance, a fine enunciation is more so.

“Social intercourse has, in the natural course of civilization, become an important ingredient of our whole life, and social life consists chiefly in oral communication. Should we not cultivate this main basis of intercourse? A proper education in this branch must begin quite early; it ought indeed to be one of the first subjects of education.

scholars will compare and regulate theirs. His conduct and deportment will be constantly before them; and from the respect he ought to have from his pupils, his life will be the model which they will imitate. The teacher's sentiments, opinions, and even manners, will insensibly become the sentiments, opinions, and manners of the scholars. They will feel a full license to do whatever the teacher does.

His actions will be appealed to as a justification of their own; and whatever the teacher considers right or wrong, will be considered as right or wrong by the scholars. The teacher's actions are under the eye of the children, and his mind, thoughts, and feelings by the side of theirs, more than any other individual's; whatever he may be, he will be sure to stamp his likeness with more or less faithfulness upon the minds of every one of his pupils.

A teacher may, and generally will, mould the conformable, imitative mind of the child into his own image. To a great extent our teachers give us our character. If this be so (and we think no one will doubt it who has either observed or re-

"To write and speak, or, in one word, to express ourselves concisely, may well be called the flower of the art of expression, which, as it is so little cultivated with us, requires particular attention; it is an accomplishment which few as yet seem to acknowledge at all, and as our numerous daily and weekly papers offer a ready receptacle for unmeasured political papers, so that necessity does not oblige us to resort to conciseness,—which forms an essential quality, for instance, of an officer's report in the field,—we must cultivate it early with the rising generation, lest the greatest part of our people should be debarred from obtaining sound and necessary political information, by the very abundance of public statements.

"This excess has rapidly increased of late, and what man of business can any longer keep pace with all the reports and messages? Hence they miss so often their aim. Let our pupils learn their style from the commentaries of Cæsar, rather than from the history of Clarendon; from the precise language of a Livingston, rather than imitate what might be called state message style."

flected), what is more important than a good moral character in a teacher !

Parents, if such a character is of any importance in your children, it is of just as much importance in their teachers. You must expect to see in your children the same virtues or vices, and particularly the latter (for the young, as well as those who are older, copy the evil of others with much more readiness and faithfulness than they do the good), taking root, and springing up into action that you see in their teacher. And, respected instructor, if you feel (and you should understand this matter) that your doctrines and practice are not right, oh, *think* of the consequences of your unhappy influence !

A teacher should *govern himself*. In this consists the great art of governing others. We lose all authority over others when we lose command of ourselves. The disloyalty of our passions requires a closer inspection and a stronger guard than any official government : and to rule your own spirit you will find much more difficult than the control of others. You will meet with many things which are keenly provocative ; but always keep a close watch over yourself, and let nothing throw you off from your guard : let your *judgment* advise and control all your actions.

If you will govern yourself, you will have a good government in your school. I never knew a teacher who was troubled in managing his scholars, that did not first lose the government of himself. These rebellious school farces, where teacher and scholar try their strength for mastery, commence from some weakness or indiscretion on the part of the teacher. *A man having the strength of law and right, and a perfect command of himself, will have his authority acknowledged, and his government respected.*

There is no employment where the aid of a good

*judgment* is more essential than in the teachers; I mean the teacher of a common school. In all our incorporated academies, colleges, and seminaries, there are laws prescribing the duties of the instructors and the conduct of the pupils. These laws are drawn up by learned, experienced men; men who are not local, acting officers of the institution, but warm friends and general supervisors. The instructors are directed by these laws, and require their obedience from the students.

Now, there is no such supervision from the experienced and learned over the common school and its teacher; the instructors in these schools are their own legislators, judicative, and executive; they publish their own laws to the colony, and they accuse, pass sentence, and punish.

The professors of a college are not allowed to make their laws—they are not permitted to punish in case of violation, but are obliged to report the offender and the offence to the president or the board of managers; they are neither legislative, judicative, nor executive: but why? because they are not as fit for these offices as common school teachers? This certainly is not the reason. Is it because the laws of a college are more numerous and difficult? Is it because the government of the educated is more difficult than the government of the uneducated? Certainly not.

The rules and regulations of a primary or district school are as important (and require more ingenuity in adapting them to the young minds and restless bodies of the children) as the laws of a college; and the pupils of a district school having usually lived without rule and restraint, are certainly less prepared to perceive what is right and what is wrong, and consequently must be more controlled by the rules and regulations of the institution?

Why, then, is this department of government



taken away from professors? The reason is, because it is much better to have it in the hands of others, or, in other words, to have the assistance, counsel, and advice of others' experience and learning. But the common school teacher has all the professor's difficulties and labours, yet none of his aids; neither in the form of wise directions, drawn up by others, nor in the judiciary of wise, experienced supervisors.

The common school teacher is left *alone*: his will the law; his nod the sentence; and his arm the executioner. Say, then, does not a common school teacher need a *good judgment*? it is the only thing that will ensure justice; it is the only restraint which ignorance, and rashness, and cruelty have. The teacher has no other aid for discovering guilt and for prescribing punishment; the judgment is the only thing that directs unlimited power; and if this is wanting, where can we look for a greater tyrant than the common school teacher may become?

A teacher should have an *even, uniform temper*. Without this qualification, there will be at one time too much harshness and severity, and at another time too much playfulness and lenity. Now the pupils will fear and tremble under the rage of passion, and now destroy all order by unbounded liberties. The teacher should always be mild, calm, and collected—never moved or excited into an improper state of feeling, but always serene and pleasant before his pupils; *and at all other times if possible*.

How often is heard the admonitory whisper, "Look out, the master is cross to-day;" and how often, too, do the scholars take the advantage of extreme good-nature, and have a real good hour of fun. Scholars watch the mercury of the teacher's feelings as closely as they do his eye; and they know when the former will give them liberties as certainly as they do when the latter will. This changeableness of temper is attended with serious evils.

If a pupil is punished, he will think that it happened because the "master was mad." If the scholar is accused of a bad recitation, he will say, "The master was teehy enough to-day, and *dreadfully* particular." If the teacher has an uneven temper, the scholar will be sure, whatever may be his deficiencies and commissions, to justify himself, and to make the teacher the cause of all the trouble. For uniformity of obedience in the school, and for the teacher's own comfort, an even uniform temper will always be necessary.

A teacher should have *decision and firmness*. He should be able to decide upon the expediency or in expediency of the act, or request, and then remain firm in his decision. I know of nothing which gives teachers so much trouble as this want of firmness. A request is negatived, but close importunity gets an affirmative. This the scholars understand; and they know that a denial only produces a short delay, and they are careful to give the teacher no peace, till vexation obtains what justice refused.

Children are full of whims and notions, and will always be seeking permission to gratify them; and unless the teacher has firmness to set them aside at once, he may expect to be constantly annoyed. Uncertainty respecting the teacher's acquiescence or refusal, will greatly increase the restless disposition of children; but when there is firmness and uniformity in the teacher, the pupils can determine beforehand what the issue would be, and therefore their requests are few and reasonable.

I know of nothing that throws such darkness over the line which separates right from wrong, as this deviation and mutability in the teacher. It also annuls all the teacher's regulations; for the pupils are never certain whether they will be enforced or not; and therefore pay little or no regard to them. An uniform, undeviating government, for two weeks, would

establish regulations in a school which would, always after, without any inquiry, regulate the conduct and desires of the scholars.

But without this stability there are no fixed, known laws to guide them, and the pupils are continually applying to the teacher. If the teacher will decide on his government, and then remain firm, he will have but very little to do in ruling; for the government of a previous day will be all that is necessary for the present one.\*

The teacher should be *qualified to sympathize with his pupils*. He should be able to feel as they feel, and to think as they think. He should be able to put his head and his heart by the side of theirs, and rejoice and labour with them. There should be mutual feeling between teacher and pupil, and this cannot be without they sympathize with each other. There should be such a sympathy on the part of the teacher with the child's feelings and operations of mind, that he will be able to take the pupil's place, and stand himself a learner with the scholar, and then make his knowledge the teacher.

It is known that children learn from each other with much more readiness and facility than they do from adults. The reason is, the one who instructs, adapts himself and his mode of teaching to the state of mind in the learner. If teachers, with all their advantage of knowledge, would become children while instructing children, they would make better teachers than the pupils could select from their own number. But adult teachers are generally so unlike children,—there is so little resemblance between them, and such a broad distinction between their operations of mind and feelings, that there is not much sympathy for

\* When order has once been thoroughly established, when the will of each has learned to bend to the unity of the collective body, the early severity may be relaxed, and give place to kindness and indulgence.—*Cousin's Report*.

each other ; and less fitness in the instructions of the teacher to the attainments and capacities of the scholar.

It should be the constant aim of the instructor to place himself in the condition of his pupils. To do this he must cultivate his imagination and his sympathetic emotions. He must come down where his pupils are, and walk in the twilight with them, and feel their difficulties, *and use their means to surmount them.* In a word, he must be the teacher of the school, and yet a learner and a member of each class.

Who is there that needs more imagination and sympathy than the teacher of children ? Without a large portion of these, who can be a good teacher ? To find out what children know, to think in the manner they think, and to feel as they feel, we must listen to their conversations with each other ; observe the language of feeling ; and reflect upon the accounts they give of the events and objects they have witnessed.

We must also free them from all restraint, and talk with them about the *things in their world.* We must be their citizens, their companions,—rejoice when they rejoice, weep when they weep, and at the same time be changing them from darkness to light ; from the littleness of children to the greatness of men.

A teacher should be able to *discriminate character*, and see the mental and moral dissimilarity of his pupils. In his school there will be no two alike ; no two who will require the same treatment, or the same manner of instructing. Hence the necessity of discriminating, that he may adapt himself to the individual peculiarities and capacities of each. This diversity of character and intelligence arises from a different physical organization, from different treatment and instruction when at home with their com-

panions and parents, and from a great diversity of other causes which have never been noticed.

These circumstances make each individual a different being for the teacher to become acquainted with. It is true that all children have many things in common ; yet it is as true that each pupil has something, *and a something which the teacher must understand*, that is unlike any other individual. The teacher's business is not so much to inquire into the causes of these peculiarities, as it is to *study* them. There is as great a variety in the minds of your pupils, as there is in their faces ; and, after a little discrimination, it will be as perceptible.

Teachers usually have but one government for every scholar in school. The timid, sensitive pupil receives the same treatment that is given to the fearless and obdurate ; the dull and inattentive the same instruction with the sprightly and diligent. The child that should be won with tenderness and affection, is crushed with harshness and tyranny ; and the daringly vicious and impertinent, has a rein no tighter than the well-disposed and obedient.

The pupil who is without restraint at home, controlled neither by parents, friends, nor conscience, the teacher attempts to govern with the same means which should be used over those who are obedient to their parents, and generally correct in their conduct. He does not perceive the government that is necessary for the scholar in school, from the nature of that which he is under while out.

No ; it often happens that the most amiable and the most unamiable, the obedient and the disobedient, those of almost intuitive perceptions and the dull and the stupid, are brought under the same form of government, and the same method of instruction ! The result is, that the teacher finds that his government and punishments do not answer their end, and his pupils are not benefited by his instructions.

They have not been such as their peculiar dispositions and capacities required. The pupil, who with proper management would have been an excellent scholar, is now marked out as a dunce; and he, who would have been submissive and obedient, is now sent from school as irreclaimable.

These are the lamentable consequences of not discriminating character and mental abilities. O how much do teachers need this power! Who can be a fit teacher without this qualification! Then, let every teacher acquire this discriminating power, and use it.

A teacher should be able to *illustrate and simplify*. Many of the elementary books which have appeared within two or three years have done much to make the studies of children attractive and intelligible; yet simple, familiar illustration from the teacher is required in every step of the scholar's progress.

The book *alone* will be of little value to the pupil; it must be accompanied with the *living voice*; and this voice should create an understanding between the child's mind and the book. The teacher should illustrate whatever the pupil may be attending to in a variety of ways; he should show the connexion which the lesson has to other branches of knowledge, and he should be able to apply the instruction to the objects or business the pupil is acquainted with.

The greatest truth may be made level with the capacities of even the younger pupils, if the teacher is apt in his comparisons and illustrations: the most abstract truth may be invested with magical attractions, if the teacher is familiar with the subject, and sees the intimate and harmonious relations which run through all the living and visible creation. The same truths may be put into a thousand child-like forms, yet not adulterated nor divested of their

power; and this the teacher should study to do by a beautiful simplicity in his language and ideas.

By luminous illustrations he may make truth as cheering and nourishing to the soul as light is to the eye, or the "spirit-giving air" to the lungs; he may make the exercise of learning something new, the most delightful employment for the pupil that this world will ever give. O why is it that children "go tardily to school"? Why is it that they dislike instruction? They were made to know and *to learn from others*:—it is because they are not taught as nature teaches,—simply, variedly, pleasantly: *the great teacher of teachers should be Nature*: let them watch her pouring light and truth into the infant mind, and learn a lesson which no other can teach.

Teachers must be well acquainted with the studies before they possess this simplicity: the most learned men are always the most simple; the half-educated are those who make a pompous parade of long words and intricate, unmeaning sentences. The man who is master of his subject is plain, pure, and perspicuous in his style, and always luminous and eloquent in thought: but none need this purity and simplicity of language and thought so much as the common school instructor; he is in a mental world, which is fresh from the Creator, and with narrow boundaries;—he is where the world with all its duplicity and error has not yet intruded; he is in that young and small part where truth and simplicity dwell; *and he should be like his citizens.*

Oh! it has made my heart pity human weakness, to see a conceited, pompous, arrogant man, the teacher and associate of children. I would that such might learn that true greatness does not consist in appearing what they are not; nor in their ridiculous formality and magisterial bearing. The teacher, from always being the oracle of his society,

is very apt to form such manners. Let me say to all such, seek your scholars' respect and affection by honesty, simplicity, and truth; and not by attempting the "unheard-of and the wonderful."

## SECTION IV.

### QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS CONCLUDED.

TEACHERS should *love their business*. To succeed in any art or profession, we must give to it all our energies, thoughts, and sympathies. But this we will not do except we *love* this art or profession. A teacher will have to make many sacrifices; he will meet with trying difficulties, and he will have to be indefatigable in his labours. Now unless he loves his employment, he will be of all men the most miserable, and will, as soon as possible, engage in something else.

I can scarcely conceive of a more unhappy man than a district school teacher, who heartily dislikes his business; and I know not of a more useless one. He dreads the hour when he will be obliged to meet his thirty or forty *Cares and Troubles*. He is wearied with impatience for the moment when he can send them from him; and then is glad the task is done. But the morrow presents the same miserable prospect, and he enters upon his duties loathingly, and with sickness of heart.

No teacher can make his school pleasant, and his scholars contented and happy, unless he loves to teach. If he is restless and unhappy, his pupils will be so. But if he is happy, and delighted with teaching, he will make others happy, and delighted



with learning. If he has a glad heart, and a smiling countenance when he meets his pupils in the school-room, they will love the place, and rejoice to meet him there.

Teachers should *make their business their study*. This will be necessary if they wish to make their profession honourable, and themselves respected and useful. You cannot do justice to your scholars, nor to your employment, without devoting to them all your time and study. They demand all your resources and all your energies.

You should be constantly inquiring into your own deficiencies, and studying the characters and dispositions of your pupils; you should keep a close eye upon their progress; you should examine your system of teaching, and your form of government; and you should be continually watching to see where you fall short, and might improve. It should be your study to know how children learn, and to look into the operations of the developing mind. You should desire to become acquainted with children and youth, and know how they think, *and how to make them think*.

You should learn their history, and their privileges and government out of school; and at all times it should be your constant aim and effort to understand your business. To this end, you should seek the society and experience of aged teachers; you should possess and peruse with care, the books and periodicals which throw light on the subject of education. At the present day, a few eminent writers and distinguished instructors are devoting their learning, experience, and talents to the improvement of elementary schools. Your library should contain their works; and if they expose evils, and suggest remedies, you should see the former and apply the latter.

I know of no periodical that is so valuable to the

teacher as the "Annals of Education and Instruction," published at Boston, and edited by William C. Woodbridge. This work is the organ of the "American Lyceum," the "American Institute," and the "American School Society." The object of each of these societies is the diffusion of knowledge, and the improvement of schools. Mr. Woodbridge's periodical, then, is the great national depository of the light and information that is made known on the subject of education.

Mr. Woodbridge is well prepared to conduct such a national work. He spent several years in Europe for the purpose of becoming acquainted with her literary institutions, and the improvements which had been made in their systems of education. After returning, he chose the "Annals of Education" as an organ through which he might make known the information he had obtained in Europe, and the condition and improvements of the schools in the United States. Every teacher and friend of education should avail himself of the aid and information which this work affords.

Books and periodicals of this kind should be the study of teachers. You should know the state of intelligence in your own country, the condition and number of its schools, and the character and qualifications of their teachers. You should study to distinguish between a change and an improvement; for every change is by no means a reformation. You should be so familiar with your profession as to prevent impositions, either in the shape of books or projected systems. You should study the human mind, and know for yourself what is adapted to it, and what is not; and then be ready to admit such suggestions as correspond with your enlightened understanding.

A lawyer, a physician, or a divine has to spend several years in preparing for the practice of his

profession ; and after they are admitted, or licensed, they must make their profession their study, if they ever attain any degree of eminence. A teacher's profession is the most difficult of the four ; and he should avail himself of all the help he can get, both from the studies and the experience of others.

Teachers also should study to obtain the co-operation of parents and other intelligent individuals, who may reside in the district, or within the circle of their acquaintance. Make the learning and the information of all to assist you in your difficult profession ; study to make improvements in the art of teaching, and give yourself up entirely to your profession. You see there is enough to do, enough to occupy all your time and all your powers : then let me say again, *make your business your study*.

Teachers should be *patient and persevering*. I know of no other employment in which these qualities are more essential. To travel with the young and feeble intellect, with all its obtuseness and waywardness, requires a large share of patience ; but if you grow impatient, and quicken your progress, you will leave your pupils behind, to wander without a guide, and in a strange country.

No, you must be willing to take as short steps as they take, and to look at every object as though you never saw it before ; you must be willing to go again and again where you have gone a thousand times ; and you must not let familiarity make you indifferent, but you must preserve all the freshness and novelty of your first journey ; for your young company will observe and learn nothing but what you feel a deep interest in. The path, too, that the Abecedarian has to tread is long and rugged ; and unless you have an unconquerable perseverance, you will not be disposed to continue his companion.

After we have mastered any point, it is difficult for us to see why it does not appear as clear and easy to

others as it does to ourselves; and you will need patience to make many repetitions and many illustrations which will be dry and tedious to you, but absolutely necessary to the learner. Children are apt to be impatient under restraint, and discouraged with difficulties,—the teacher should possess the opposite qualities for their imitation: the pupils should see in his conduct that perseverance conquers all things; *that nothing is denied to well-directed labour; and that if any one will wait long enough, he will obtain his object.*

He who engages in teaching should be qualified *to overcome the difficulties* of his profession. There are many trying difficulties peculiar to the district school teacher; but these he must be able to surmount. He will meet with many parents who are criminally indifferent to the education of their children. This apathy or indifference he will have to encounter under a variety of forms.—Many parents have not been educated to the love of knowledge, and therefore do not think an education very important for their children.

They do not set a good example for their offspring, by taking every opportunity to improve their own minds, and to point out the advantages of knowledge; and hence the children suppose there is no very great necessity for attending to the instructions of the teacher. So, instead of having the co-operation of parents, the teacher will have to labour against their unintentional bad influence.

The teacher will find some of his employers unable to appreciate his faithfulness and his daily sacrifices; he will be obliged to toil without their sympathy, and frequently without their respect. This he must not only put up with, but he must make extra efforts to supply the parents' deficiencies. The attendance of the scholars will be irregular; and the school badly provided with necessary apparatus; the

teacher must expect to labour under these disadvantages. The school-house may be unpleasantly located and badly constructed ; it may be in a very uncomfortable condition, the windows broken, the door off from the hinges, the roof open and leaky, the floor and benches broken, and the stove or fireplace filling the cramped and crowded room with smoke ; this he must endure in many instances until he can prevail on his employers to make a change.

He will find that the scholars have been superficially taught ; that they have been badly governed ; that they have wretched habits, both in acquiring and reciting their lessons ; and that they are averse to systematic and close application. These obstacles he will have to oppose and overcome. The scholars will not be furnished with appropriate books ; those they have, are either too elevated for their capacities, and will require constant explanation, or so old and familiar that they have ceased to excite any interest.

From a want of books, he will not be able to classify his pupils, and thus he will be obliged to attend to them separately : this deficiency and unsuitableness in books will cause the teacher much perplexity and additional labour ; but this he must be qualified to do, and prepared to endure.

He will find many things requiring his attention at the same time ; some requesting privileges and others assistance ; some covertly in mischief, and others disposed to be idle. He must hear and see, consent and refuse, keep order, and give instruction in almost the same moment. He must have, united with the most rapid despatch, great thoroughness and calmness ; the greatest versatility of mind, united with strength and clearness.

Such will be the demands on a teacher, and to these he must be willing and able to conform. The teacher will meet with parents who are partial and full of whims and unreasonable desires. To such he

must be firm; it will not do to humour them, and yet it will be desirable to please. He will need much tact and much management; he must have a good share of common sense and independence, and pursue a just, straight-forward course. To do this at all times, he will find difficult; but the requirement is necessarily connected with his office.

Accompanying your labours, there will be continued monotony and sameness. This you must expect, from the nature of your employment. The advancement of the pupils must be slow; while the younger are going over the same ground that has just been travelled by the more advanced. This want of variety will be unpleasant, and you will have to free yourself from mechanical operations, and seize upon all the interest and variety that the cultivation of the mind will admit of.

If you have a good share of ingenuity, and love your business, this monotony will almost disappear; but if your own mind is barren, and unable to find amusement in the union of truth with the intellectual faculties, you will meet with a weary sameness.

You will have to guard against the effect which the constant intercourse with minds far inferior will have upon your own mind. In school you are the criterion and the oracle,—your word is law, and none dare dissent,—your reasons are given, and never disputed,—you are the speaker, and no one objects or interrupts. Now, you must be watchful that you are not as authoritative and dogmatical out of school, as you must be (to a certain degree) in school.

After men have lived the life of a teacher for three or four years, they are not commonly very agreeable companions. The nature of their business has produced this unhappy effect; and you will be wise in bringing all your powers to bear against this influence. You should frequently measure your

mind with your equals, and always treat your pupils as intelligent beings ; as if they had a sense of right and wrong, and a perception of truth and falsehood. And, finally, you must expect much ingratitude and small compensation. And you must be prepared to forgive the one, and live upon the other.

These are a few of the difficulties which a teacher must meet with, but which he must be qualified to overcome. He will need a good share of common sense ; a strong, well-furnished mind ; a constant curb over his feelings, and a close watch over his habits. Let every candidate inquire whether or not he has these qualifications, before he assumes an office which will certainly demand them.

A teacher should always appear *pleasant and affectionate*. He should make the scholars feel that he is seeking their good, and that he desires their happiness. This will be necessary to win their confidence and their affections. Without these he will labour in vain, and in misery. But if he is pleasant and agreeable to the children, they will love to be with him, and to hear his instructions. The love they have for the teacher will be transferred to the studies he teaches, and the acquisition of knowledge may be made a constant amusement from the manner it is taught.

A teacher, likewise, should be qualified to show his pupils the *importance of knowledge*. We are all very unwilling to make strong exertions for that of which we cannot see the use or value ; and we are very dilatory in acquiring that which does not give present enjoyment, or by which we are not in some way immediately benefited.

- How much more disinclined and dilatory are children, who are unable to perceive the nature and relations of things. They cannot see the necessity, or the advantages, or the pleasures of knowledge ; and what incentives have they to make its acquisi-

tion? Now, it is necessary that the teacher should supply, to some extent, what their ignorance shuts out. He should show them the power that knowledge has given to the human race,—the liberty that it has given to nations,—the glory and dignity with which it has invested the human mind,—the comforts, conveniences, and pleasures it has conferred on society, and the respect and influence it gives to individuals.

A perception (even if it should be a faint one) of some of these grand results, will give them a foretaste, and a determination, which will ensure high attainments. It will make his scholars regard the means of cultivating the mind their highest privilege and their greatest blessing. Teachers, then, should not only *possess*, and be qualified to *impart* knowledge to their pupils, but they should be able to make them *feel its value*.

## SECTION V.

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMON SCHOOLS, AND THE DUTIES OF THOSE WHO HAVE A GENERAL SUPERINTENDENCE OVER THEM.

THE importance of good common or district schools is seen and felt but by few. The necessity of virtue and intelligence among a free people is always admitted; yet the great majority of our citizens are almost wholly indifferent to the primary schools, *the very sources of a nation's intelligence*; for, as it is well known, nineteen citizens out of twenty receive all their education in them. Even reflecting men seldom look so near the beginning of things as to see that the blessings and perpetuity of



our happy government are to a great extent in the hands and under the direction of the common school-master.

In our common schools the nation receives its education.\* Mothers and schoolmasters sow the seeds either of tyranny, anarchy, or liberty; for the strength and destiny of any community lie in the virtue and intelligence of its younger members. A wise and good government can be established and sustained only by the wise and good; and if the teachers in our common schools are ignorant and vicious, the youthful part of the nation must be in very unfavourable circumstances: but if they are wise and good, the character of the people must be greatly benefited.

In our common schools, our ministers and magistrates, legislators and presidents, commenced their education. Here did the men whom we admire as the strength and beauty of our nation receive their first impressions, their first principles, and their first character. In these schools did the men, to whom we look up for counsel and instruction, commence their moral and intellectual greatness; and in these primary founts of knowledge are placed those who will-perpetuate or destroy all that is excellent and beautiful in this young republic.

Is not the condition and character of our common

\* There is more hope of the apathy of ignorance, than of the self-satisfaction of contentment with matters as they are. There are many who look upon the current education for all ranks in this country as a model of perfection. As the *Edinburgh Review* (No 116 page 511) says, "We are even ignorant of our wants. In fact the difficulty of all educational improvement in Britain lies less in the amount, however enormous, of work to be performed, than in the notion that not a great deal is requisite. Our pedagogical ignorance is only equalled by our pedagogical conceit; and where few are competent to understand, all believe themselves qualified to decide."—*Simpson*.

schools, then, of the highest importance? Are not the character and qualifications of their teachers of the very first consideration? These schools have in embryo the future communities of this land. With them, the empire and liberty of these States must rise or fall, for they are at once the repositories of freedom, and the pillars of the republic.

And now, we again ask, are not these schools of the highest importance? Should not every individual feel the deepest interest in their character and condition? Should not the strong arm of government be thrown around them for a protection? And should not the wisdom of legislation watch over and counsel them with a parental solicitude? \* To what purpose shall we enact laws, unless there is intelligence to perceive their justice, and principle to which they can appeal? And what other fountains of intelligence have we for the *whole people*, but our common schools?

But do these schools receive that close-attention, that friendly aid, that enlightened and fostering care, which their high importance demands? Our intelligent men appear as if our individual happiness, and the glory and prosperity of this nation rested rather in our constitutions, revenues, and armies, than in the virtue and intelligence of the whole people. And how often do philanthropists forget that the chief part of human vice is evidently founded on the predominance of the sensual over the moral and intellectual nature!

The learned and leading men in nearly every section of the United States overlook the common school, and give their attention, influence, and pecuniary support to select schools, academics, colleges,

\* Care is everywhere to be taken to furnish necessitous parents with the means of sending their children to school, by providing them with the things necessary for their instruction, or with such clothes as they stand in need of,—*Cousin's Report*.

and seminaries. These men seldom inquire into the character or capacity of the teacher or of the district-school. Not giving these schools their patronage, they feel entirely indifferent to their condition. The teacher, consequently, is selected by the ignorant ; and the whole management of the school left in the hands of the careless and illiterate.

The uninformed part of the district know neither the proper qualifications of a teacher, nor the value of an education ; and therefore a man having very limited acquirements, and probably many forbidding qualities, and without the least aptitude to teach, is frequently employed to impart character and education to the children. What may we expect the teacher to be, when chosen by such men ! What efficiency can we look for in the school, when the careless and the ignorant have the whole direction !

These schools, then, should have the superintendence of the learned and leading men ; they should assist in making choice of the teacher ; they should give the teacher their co-operation, and encourage him by their attention and their patronage. This more favoured part of the community should feel that they have a duty to perform towards the less favoured ; and that the blessings of society are multiplied by affording the means of moral and intellectual instruction to every individual.

The learned and wealthy should perceive that the education of the infant mind is far less expensive to them than the support of the aged criminal ; that the fruitfulness of their lands depends not so much upon the richness of the soil as upon the intelligence of the cultivators ; and that the labour of him whose head can help his hands is far more profitable than the service of the ignorant. The learned and wealthy should see likewise that universal education is the only true security of life and property.

Learned and influential men may do much for

common schools, by encouraging qualified teachers, and by obtaining for them public assistance. They may give their respect and lend their influence to the profession of teaching, and by this means make it more reputable and lucrative than it is at present.\* They may give interest and assistance to institutions and associations intended to qualify teachers and diffuse knowledge; and they may see that legislation does all that it can do for such schools.

The duties of inspectors are very important to common schools. As the character and usefulness of the schools depend upon the qualifications of the teachers, the inspectors should be strict in their examinations, and well assured of the competency of those who receive certificates. In organizing the school system, inspectors were appointed to prevent the disqualified from entering into the responsible profession of teaching.

They are to judge what candidates are prepared for instructing; and to admit none but such as are qualified. Thus the character of the district school is placed almost entirely in their hands. It is in their power to admit none but such as promise to be useful in their vocation and honourable to their profession; or, by being lax and faithless, to give certificates to those who have not one necessary qualification; and who will, by attempting to discharge duties of which they are entirely ignorant, bring disgrace upon themselves and their employment.

The laxity and ignorance of some inspectors is

\* In Prussia and in France a weekly paper and a monthly magazine are published by the government, and sent to all the schools. The schools of the United States ask their respective state governments for the same assistance. I do not know that a part of the school fund could be more wisely expended than in defraying the expenses of a weekly paper for each elementary school. This paper should be devoted entirely to the great interest of primary education.

one great cause of the low and useless condition of many of our common schools. They have acted upon the principle that a poor school is better than none; and thus have given their certificate to those whom they knew were unqualified. Hence the candidate's examination, under the board of inspectors, has frequently been little else than mere form and ceremony; affording no obstacle to ignorance, and no measure for the discovery and encouragement of real merit.

The inspectors are requested by the inhabitants of a certain district "to be lenient to such a candidate, for he is a cousin, or can be hired cheap; and although he has not much learning, he will do well enough for their children." The inspectors, acting upon their old principle, that a poor teacher is better than none; and forgetting the high duties of their office, and the honour of that profession of which they are the guardians, listen to the request, and the disqualified candidate finds no difficulty in obtaining a certificate.

This compromise with ignorance and avarice on the part of inspectors, has placed men as teachers of our common schools who would not be trusted by their employers with a favourite horse. Such are the consequences of unfaithfulness among inspectors. Many of them should be far more rigid than they have heretofore been; and they should rigidly and watchfully exercise the *whole* of their duties.

They should not only ascertain that the candidate has the amount of knowledge requisite for a teacher, but they should examine his powers of communicating to others the knowledge he may possess. This qualification, inspectors almost entirely overlook. But, as a *teacher*, it is certainly as important that he should be able to impart to others what he knows, as it is to be familiar with the branches he is expected to teach. And he should be able, not

only to communicate what he has acquired, but he should be able to communicate it *to children*. The teacher should be able to simplify and illustrate, and adapt his instructions to the infant mind.

But whether the candidate has this necessary ability or not, the inspectors seldom ascertain. This is frequently found to be a serious neglect; for teachers are often seen in our common schools who have sufficient knowledge of the elementary branches which they teach, but who are wholly unqualified for giving instruction to others. The want of this qualification is a common defect among teachers; and inspectors should be the more watchful over their applicants for certificates. Inspectors should also ascertain whether the candidate is fond of the society of children and youth; and whether he has studied the operations of the youthful mind, and found out how children think and learn.

And, above all, they should know that the applicant possesses a good moral character. Many are admitted to teach in our primary schools, in consideration of their experience or high qualifications, who are well known to lead immoral lives, and to entertain and teach the very worst of principles. The highest qualifications should never procure a certificate when there is the least blemish on the moral character; and the inspectors here should be firm, and require some knowledge of the candidate's former life.

I know not any duties more important and responsible, in relation to district schools, than those which belong to inspectors. But how often are they shamefully and criminally discharged! If schools are as their teachers, (and they certainly are,) how strict should inspectors be in their examination!

\* It is the duty of the enlightened persons to whom the superintendence of the schools is confided, to watch over the progress of the masters in attainments.—*Cousin's Report*.

As the trustees of a common school are local officers, living within the district, they have a close and continued superintendence over the school. Their duties are to employ a teacher, keep the school-house in repair, and supply it, or see that it is supplied, with all the necessaries which the comfort of the teacher and scholars may require. While they are in office, the immediate management of the school is put into their hands. If it is the voice of the district, it becomes the duty of the trustees to see that a proper teacher is constantly employed. They must judge of the applications of teachers, and refer the most promising to the inspectors.

If the school should be vacant, and there should be no applications from teachers, it is the duty of the trustees to make it known abroad that an instructor is wanted in their district. It is also the business of the trustees to see that the school-house is of a proper size, in a good condition, and is comfortably furnished with fixtures, wood, and water. If any necessary should be wanting, they have the power, and it is their duty, to order it, and call upon the district for payment.

The trustees should likewise reconcile the difficulties which may arise between the teacher and scholars, or the teacher and the employers. The number of children in the district who draw public money must be made out by the trustees, and reported to the commissioners of common schools. These are some of the principal duties of the trustees of district schools. It can be seen, that they are of such importance that the manner in which they are discharged will greatly affect the interest and usefulness of the school.

The trustees are the life of the school. If they are active, watchful, and faithful, the school will flourish; but if they are irresolute and indifferent, the school will dwindle, and finally go down. The

trustees should act in union, and with energy. But it unfortunately happens that this is not the case in every instance; for it is frequently seen that they are far from being prompt and united in the discharge of their duties. They are often elected when absent, and probably not informed of their important relation to the school till several months have passed by; and then it is not unusual for them, through some personal pique, or the pressure of business, or from the peculiar character of their colleagues, or some other excuse or whim, to object from serving.\*

Thus the school for months, and very likely for a whole year, has no efficient overseer to apply to, either for wants or direction. Trustees frequently omit giving notice, or at least general notice, of their special or stated meetings; and it is very often that these meetings are not attended by themselves. They frequently differ in their opinions respecting the character or wages of the teacher, and thus create a delay or a dissension, which is of the greatest injury to the district. Sometimes they disagree on what are necessities for the school; and hence derange and almost destroy the organization of the school, by denying its reasonable requests.

One trustee wants a cheap teacher, and a school one half of the year; the others think that a well-qualified teacher, although his wages are more, is the cheapest, and believe that the district will be none too wise if the school is continued through the year. The result of this division, very often, is the prevention of any school whatever for a long time.

These are some of the evils which our schools suffer by having ignorant, faithless, and unreasonable trustees. Men who are appointed to exercise a fos-

\* No one shall refuse to become one of the managing school-committee.—*Cousin's Report*.



tering care over the school, prove themselves to be its worst enemies. The inhabitants of the district perceive that the affairs of the school want attending to, but know that it belongs to the trustees to see to them, and so find an excuse for their indifference. Thus the trustees, by their office, prevent others from doing what they themselves leave undone. It is far better that a school should have no such guardians, unless they are disposed to be united, faithful, and active. Poor schools are owing in a great measure to the want of good trustees, and every district should be solicitous whom they appoint to this office.

It is the duty of the commissioners of common schools to return the reports of the trustees to the general superintendent, and to distribute the public money among the several districts of the town, according to the number of children in each whose age entitles them to the public fund. It is likewise their duty to determine the location of the school-house, when the inhabitants of the district do not agree; and also to divide or unite districts which in their view may require such change.

The commissioners and inspectors are, moreover, expected to pay frequent visits to the several schools of the town, and examine their condition, the faithfulness and ability of the teachers, and the progress which the children make in their studies. A faithful discharge of this latter duty would be of great benefit to our schools. I sincerely hope, that these respectable and important guardians of education will hereafter feel it their interest and their pleasure to be more attentive to the momentous duty confided to their trust. Every state needs a separate officer of public instruction. The minister of public instruction in Prussia gives his whole attention to the school and state of education. But in our state the general superintendent of common schools is,

likewise, secretary of state. This is too much for one officer. There should be nothing to divert the attention of that minister who has the general supervision of the people's education. This public officer should, also, take the highest rank. In Prussia and in France the minister of instruction ranks with the highest officers of state. But singular as it may seem, in our own country, where education if possible is much more important, this is not the case. *Several of the states, even, have never had any such officer!!!*

Ministers, if they are disposed, may do much for our common schools. I know of no class of individuals who have the power of doing more. But it is unfortunately the case, that ministers neglect to take that care of the education of the children in their congregation, which their duty and success demand. But few perceive that by the time the younger part of their flock receive years and knowledge sufficient to be profited by their sermons, the world has given them characters which will be difficult to change; and which will probably remain for time and eternity. They seem to forget that the school-room is the place where they should meet the minds of their youthful hearers.

The minister may frequently invite the teachers of the schools in his parish to visit him, and then converse with them on the best method of teaching children, and how they may increase and improve the means of instruction. He will here have an opportunity of rendering assistance to those teachers who feel an inability to fill their difficult and responsible office. Ministers should be familiar with the character and qualifications of the teachers in their congregation, and with the condition of all the schools.

They should know the number of the children who go to school, and the number who do not attend.

They may know the progress which the children make in their studies, and the fitness and character of the books they use; and they may ascertain and improve the moral discipline by which they are daily governed.

But how seldom is this done! How few ministers know as much as they might of the means and amount of education in their congregation! How few, in their pastoral visits, stop at the school-house, and examine the morals and intelligence of the children! We do hope that ministers will feel that these schools have stronger claims upon their care and counsel than they have heretofore received.\*

But with all this desirable and necessary supervision from law, learning, and experience, the character and usefulness of the school will depend very much upon the individual efforts of each inhabitant of the district. Parents must be willing to give a fair compensation to the instructors of their children; and every teacher, and scholar, and guardian, and parent, must feel that the interest and value of the school depend upon his own intelligence and exertions.†

\* We must have the clergy; we must neglect nothing to bring them into the path towards which every thing urges them to turn,—both their obvious interest, and their sacred calling, and the ancient services which their order rendered to the cause of civilization in Europe. But if we wish to have the clergy allied with us in the work of popular instruction, that instruction must not be stripped of morality and religion; for then indeed it would become the duty of the clergy to oppose it, and they would have the sympathy of all virtuous men, of all good fathers of families, and even of the mass of the people, on their side.

† After the administrative authorities, it is unquestionably the clergy who ought to occupy the most important place in the business of popular education. How is it possible they could neglect, nay, even repugn, such a mission? But that they have done so is a fact, which, however deplorable, we are bound to acknowledge. The clergy in France are generally indifferent, or even hostile, to the education of the people.—*Cousin's Report*.

## SECTION VI.

## TEACHING SHOULD BE MADE A PROFESSION.

TEACHING, in our district schools, should be made a distinct profession. The teacher's employment should be made as honourable and as separate as the physician's, the divine's, or the lawyer's.\* The teacher should prepare himself for his business, and labour as exclusively in his calling as the lawyer does in his.

To be a good instructor requires as much knowledge of human nature, as uniform a government over ourselves, and as complete a mastery of the respective studies, as it does to be a good preacher. All who take this view of the subject, and we think all who have had any experience, or made but a few observations, will, must agree with us, when we say that teaching should be made a distinct profession.

We would not employ a man who may have had a good education, but had given his attention to buying and selling goods, to be our physician, when disease takes hold upon us. We would not engage a man to plead our rights before a judge and jury, who had not made the law and the rights of man his

\* But if, on the one hand, it is incumbent on those charged with the conduct of the public schools to strive to accomplish the duties the state imposes on them for the training of citizens, they, on their part, have a right to expect that every one should pay the respect and gratitude to which they are entitled as labourers in the sacred work of education. Masters and mistresses ought, therefore, to be the objects of the general esteem due to their laborious and honourable functions.—*Cousin's Report.*

study for years. Neither would we choose that man to be our teacher in divine things, who does not make the Bible the rule and study of his life.

Why not? Why do we require the wisdom of experience and professional knowledge in these three vocations? Is it not because we know that they are absolutely necessary? What is it that the law, or the medical, or the theological student gains in devoting six or eight years to literary, and three years to professional studies? Is it not the experience and the wisdom of others? Is not all this preparation made to enable them to perceive the nature, rights, condition, and duties of man?

Now, are the labours of the teacher less difficult, less arduous than either of the professions I have mentioned? That the teacher may perform his duty well, does he not need the experience of others? Is it not necessary for him to perceive the nature, duties, and condition of men? This will be admitted. Then why not make it as necessary to spend the same amount of time, and enjoy privileges as high for obtaining this knowledge?

Why is it that the practice of law and medicine is so much more honourable and lucrative than elementary teaching? Not because these professions are more important to the community—not because there is any more necessity for them. No; they are less important, less necessary. What, then, is the reason? We answer, that before men can practise in either of these professions, they must qualify themselves—they must fit themselves for doing honour and justice to their profession.

These professions have taken a high place in the estimation of the world, not because they are more influential in giving a high and noble character to men, for the elementary teacher has the formation of the character in his own hands—but because there are in these professions, learning, and talent, and

character. But why are there not this learning, and character, and talent among teachers? simply because their learning is not appreciated—not rewarded; talent with them has no opportunity of gaining distinction, and character is not always required.

Men think more of their *wills*, or the pleasures of the body, than they do of an education, or the happiness of a well-regulated mind. The reason of this unwise choice is, they have never been educated to the love of knowledge—they have never felt the power and pleasure there is in *knowing*. Why? They have never had teachers who could develop the mind, and lay open before it the treasures of science. They never had teachers who made the school-room the most delightful place they ever visited—who made the exercise of learning the most agreeable one they ever engaged in.

But why have there not been such teachers? *There have never been any means or pains taken to qualify them.* The teachers have not made instruction their business—their profession. They have not loved their employment—probably disliked it. They became teachers from necessity. This office was not their choice—it was not one that they had been making any preparation for. How can it be expected that they should make their pupils love knowledge, from the simple, attractive form in which it should be presented.

Men who assume this difficult profession, should avail themselves of all the aid they can obtain. They should examine themselves, and see if they are prepared for their work—whether they have an aptitude to teach, and whether it is probable they will make their business, their profession for life. If they intend to make instruction only a temporary thing, a stepping-stone to something else, a mere filling up of a vacant month, they will have no ambition to excel in this calling, but will be desirous

## DISTRICT SCHOOL.

of terminating this unpleasant occupation as soon as possible, and of entering into other engagements more profitable.

As long as this is the state of things, our school-houses will be furnished with heedless, incompetent teachers. If the character of the instructors is elevated, they must be willing to make their employment their profession. It must be their highest ambition to obtain the name of a *good schoolmaster*. They must labour to make their office as much respected as it is important—*as well rewarded as it is useful*.<sup>\*</sup> Teachers may do this if they will make their business their study, their profession.

When any business is made a profession there is a constant accumulation, from experience and experiment, of practical knowledge; the evils that are discovered receive a remedy, and depart to be felt no more—the improvements that are made continue, and the highest point of excellence of one aged teacher is made the starting point of improvement by his successor.

The reason the art of teaching is so little understood, is,—*there is no instruction in the past*. If teaching had been made a profession, there would be a record of the success and the failure of the past, which would contain lessons more valuable to the teacher than all the projected theories and systems in creation; but there has been no book kept; there is no light from the past to throw its rays into the future; no voice to teach, and no decisions to counsel.

What was experiment one hundred years ago is

\* Schoolmasters are regarded by the law of Prussia as servants of the state; as such, they have the claim to a retiring pension in their old age; and in every department a society, which the law recommended rather than enjoined, has been formed for the relief of the widows and orphans of schoolmasters.—*Cousin's Report*.

experiment still. That which was conjecture *then*, is uncertainty *now*. Teachers have had no communication with each other,—no exchange of views and sentiments,—no mutual aid; each one has toiled alone; each teacher's practical knowledge has been buried with him, and silence rests upon their tombs, and they speak not.

If instruction was made a profession, teachers would feel a sympathy for each other. Members of the same profession become attached by a similarity of efforts and views; and in this way the self-denying life of a teacher may become social. He would feel that not only his own honour, but the honour of all his professional brethren, and the respectability of the profession itself, depended upon a faithful, conscientious discharge of his duties.

He would feel that this united effort for the honour and usefulness of his profession, demanded something from him; and he would act as if he had pledged something. This great united effort, this extensive communication of sentiments, would make the teacher feel that the eyes of the world were upon him. He would feel that he had an audience, and that he had competitors. He would see that there was distinction to be gained—that *he* might be *known and honoured*.

Unknown or disrespected as he now is, he is conscious of excellences unappreciated, or deficiencies unobserved. He compares himself with his school, and is proud of his high attainments; he sees himself the oracle of the little world he moves in, and believes that to know more would be useless. The intimacy that the transactions of a united body of men would give him with other teachers, would gain him honour for his excellences, or dishonour for his deficiencies. The learning he would meet with would lessen the high opinion he had conceived of



his own ; and the united intelligence of all would make him perceive that more might be learned.

A united body of men command attention and receive respect,—*for they have power.* The deference that is paid to the whole is, in part, transferred to each individual. In the eye of the world, the limited knowledge of any one of the individual parts is enlarged when seen in connexion with the whole. We say, then, again, let teaching be made a profession ; and let teachers be united for their mutual improvement, and for the respectability and usefulness of their honourable profession.

## SECTION VII.

### SEMINARIES FOR TEACHERS.

MRS. AUSTIN, the accomplished translator of M. Cousin's report on "Public Instruction in Prussia," says, "there are two or three other points which I would fain recommend to the peculiar attention of the reader. One of the most important is the absolute necessity of securing a constant supply of well-trained schoolmasters. Time and experience have, it is to be supposed, nearly removed the illusion of 'mutual instruction' as a substitute for the instruction communicated by a mature to an immature mind :—as an auxiliary in certain mechanical details, no one disputes its utility. Observation long ago convinced me of the entire truth of the maxim laid down by the Prussian government, and approved by M. Cousin, that 'As is the master, so is the school.'"

There is no truth more evident than the one expressed in this maxim. The schools must from the

experiment still. That which was conjecture *then*, is uncertainty *now*. Teachers have had no communication with each other,—no exchange of views and sentiments,—no mutual aid ; each one has toiled alone ; each teacher's practical knowledge has been buried with him, and silence rests upon their tombs, and they speak not.

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necessity of the case be like their teachers, hence the absolute necessity of using proper means to qualify them for the profession of teaching. In this department of instruction, Prussia is far in advance of the United States. That despotic government (though at present paternal in administration) requires the teachers of elementary schools to pass through certain stages of preparation in a normal school, before they can assume the difficult and responsible station of instructor. The organized school system in neither of our state governments makes such requirements. We have not till very lately given any encouragement to young men that would induce them to make suitable preparations to teach even a district school. The state of New York has just made some provision for the education of teachers; the plan we shall speak of before we close this article. There have been a few private seminaries which have made the education of teachers their principal object; but these have received no assistance from government, and have done very little towards supplying the schools of the United States.

The seminary at Andover, conducted for several years past by the Rev. S. R. Hall, has done much good, both as presenting a model for such institutions, and by sending out many able instructors. At present it seems to be generally admitted that such institutions are indispensable, and that it is the duty of the State governments to establish and sustain them.—Since we are about to open seminaries for teachers among us, it is fortunate that we have a full and faithful report by M. Cousin, of the workings of the teachers' seminaries in Prussia.

The American edition of this work will furnish our legislature, school committees, and school teachers with instruction, not only from the highest authority, but also from the most enlightened source.

While speaking of the necessity, nature, studies and benefits of seminaries for teachers, I shall avail myself of such parts of this report as will give light and interest to the subject; for says M. Cousin, "The true greatness of a people does not consist in borrowing nothing from others, but in borrowing from all whatever is good, and in perfecting whatever it appropriates."

In M. Cousin's remarks on the training of primary instructors, he says, "The best plans of instruction cannot be executed except by the instrumentality of good teachers; and the state has done nothing for popular education, if it does not watch that those who devote themselves to teaching be well prepared; then suitably placed, encouraged, and guided in the duty of continued self-improvement; and lastly, promoted and rewarded, in proportion to their advancement, and punished according to their faults. Such is the object of title 6, of the law 1829. We translate that, as we did those which preceded.

"A schoolmaster, to be worthy of his vocation, should be pious, discreet, and deeply impressed with the dignity and sacredness of his calling. He should be thoroughly acquainted with the duties peculiar to the grade of primary instruction in which he desires to be employed; he should possess the art of communicating knowledge, with that of moulding the minds of children; he should be unshaken in his loyalty to the state, conscientious in the duties of his office, friendly in his intercourse with the parents of his pupils, and with his fellow-citizens in general; finally, he should strive to inspire them with a lively interest in the school, and secure to it their favour and support.

"*Of the training of schoolmasters.*—In order gradually to provide schools with masters of this character, the care of their training must not be

abandoned to chance; the foundation of primary normal schools must be continued. The expenses of these establishments should be defrayed partly by the general funds of the state, and partly by the departmental funds for schools."

Here Cousin unequivocally declares, that the "state has done nothing for popular education" if it does not see that the teachers are well qualified. The legislature of each state should immediately make provision for the education of common school teachers. That Prussia has done this, is the whole secret of her superior schools. But teachers must not only be "prepared," they must also be, and this by the government, "suitably placed, encouraged, guided and rewarded." How far short are we of Cousin's advice and Prussia's practice!

The establishments for educating teachers in Prussia are supported by the government funds and by the smaller and local divisions of the government. With us the school fund of each state may erect suitable buildings, remunerate the professors, furnish a library and apparatus, and bear a part of the student's expenses while preparing himself for teaching. This would give encouragement to make teaching a study and a profession for life.

The following extract is from Cousin's report, and is translated by himself from title 6 of the law of 1819. We make this extract to show the design which the Prussian government had in establishing teachers' seminaries, or to use the Prussian name "normal schools." "The principal aim of the primary normal schools should be, to form men, sound both in body and mind, and to imbue the pupils with the sentiment of religion, and with that zeal and love for the duties of a schoolmaster which is so closely allied to religion." It is seen that their design is to make their pupils *men*, in knowledge

and in person, and not only this, but religious men, and men in love with their business.

The next extract designates the length of time to be spent, and marks out the course of studies to be pursued in these seminaries.

"In each primary normal school the length of the course shall be three years; of which the first is devoted to supplemental primary instruction, the second to specific and more elevated studies, and the third to practice and occasional experiments in the primary school annexed, and in other schools of the place. When the supplemental instruction is not required, the course may be reduced to two years."

The plan proposed for this state, in the report of, and adopted by, the regents of the university, is to select one academy in each of the eight senate districts of the state; to appropriate five hundred dollars to each, for the purchase of a library and apparatus adapted to the use of those who are preparing to be teachers, thus reserving six thousand dollars out of the permanent fund of ten thousand dollars now on hand, for future contingencies; and from the annual surplus revenue of the literature fund, (estimated at three thousand five hundred dollars,) to appropriate four hundred dollars to each of the academies, to provide a special course of instruction in the art of teaching.

The following academies have been selected for this purpose.

For 1st District,	Erasmus Hall Academy,	King's Co.
2d	Montgomery	" Orange Co.
3d	Kinderhook	" Columbia Co.
4th	St. Lawrence	" St. Lawrence Co.
5th	Fairfield	" Herkimer Co.
6th	Oxford	" Chenango Co.
7th	Canandaigua	" Ontario Co.
8th	Middlebury	" Genesee Co.

In regard to the course of study to be pursued, it is remarked in the report, that the *standard* should

be raised "as high as possible," because "the qualifications of those who follow it will incline to range below, and not above, the prescribed standard." It proposes that none should be allowed to enter on the course, who are not acquainted with reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and so much of geography as is found in the duodecimo works on this subject, usually studied in our schools. The following are the subjects of study proposed for the teachers' course, which are required to be thoroughly taught, and while they are not intended to exclude others, shall not be allowed to give way to any.

1. The English language.
2. Writing and drawing.
3. Arithmetic, mental and written; and book-keeping.
4. Geography and general history, combined.
5. The history of the United States.
6. Geometry, trigonometry, mensuration, and surveying.
7. Natural philosophy, and the elements of astronomy.
8. Chemistry and mineralogy.
9. The constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the state of New York.
10. Select parts of the revised statutes, and the duties of public officers.
11. Moral and intellectual philosophy.
12. The principles of teaching.

Although the regents have not excluded other studies than those contained in this programme, yet I am surprised that botany, zoology, and agriculture, and even physiology, are not included.

What more interesting and useful studies for our young farmers than botany, zoology, and agriculture? And how important is it that they should have teachers who are well acquainted with these departments of natural history.—Composition like-



wise is not mentioned ; one of the most important parts of every man's education.

To secure the services of those who have been educated by the state, to make such follow the business of teaching, as a profession for life, is the most difficult thing of this part of legislation. The graduates of teachers' seminaries will be qualified to demand a much higher compensation for their services, than the employers of district schools will feel disposed to give them: and unless there is something to prevent, the labourers will go where they are best rewarded. There are two ways of securing the services of those who have been educated in the teachers' seminary.

The first is, by creating a disposition in parents to reward their teachers with an adequate compensation. If parents are disposed to pay these teachers as much as they will be able to get at any other employment, they will secure them as teachers; but they will not teach unless parents pay more than they do at present. This rests with parents; and we do hope that they will adequately reward those who have spent much time and money in preparing themselves to teach.

The other way is adopted by Prussia. I think the feelings of the people and the spirit of our government would forbid this. I do not think that it can be adopted in this country. It may perhaps in part. The following extract from Cousin will show the laws regarding those who have been qualified to teach by the government. "Every pupil of a normal school is obliged, at the expiration of the term, to accept the mastership to which the provincial consistories may appoint him; the prospect of advancement being, however, always set before him as the consequence of continued good conduct." This compels every one who is competent to become a schoolmaster. If they are not competent, they

are either rejected altogether or sent back to review their studies. This will be seen in another part of the same work, referred to above.

“Every young man whose competency is admitted shall receive a certificate, delivered and signed by the whole commission, his examiners, by their president, and by the head-master of the primary normal school, or other establishment in which he was trained to his calling. It must state his moral character, and his degree of aptitude for teaching: such as prove incompetent shall, by a formal decree, be wholly rejected, or sent back to continue their studies.”

The Prussian government is careful not to admit those into the normal schools who are physically or morally disqualified from making good teachers. To show this we make another extract from Cousin.

“The normal school is by no means designed for those who are unfit for any business, and think, if they can read and write, they are capable of becoming schoolmasters. This notion is so deeply rooted, that you hear fathers declare with all the simplicity in the world,—‘My son is too delicate to learn a business,’ or, ‘I don’t know what to make of my son, but I think of getting him into the normal school.’

“We reply to such, that the pupils of the normal school must, on the contrary, be sound both in body and mind, and able to brave the toils and troubles of a career, as laborious as it is honourable. Much neglect unfortunately still exists on a subject which is of the highest importance,—the methodical preparation of these young men for the calling which it is desired they should embrace. A false direction is often given to their preliminary studies. A young man is believed to be well prepared for the normal school, if he have passed the limits of elementary

instruction, and if he have acquired a greater mass of knowledge than other pupils.

“It frequently happens, that candidates who come strongly recommended from school, pass the examination without credit, or are even rejected. The most immediate and the most important aim of all instruction, is to train up and complete the man; to awaken the energies of his soul, and to render him not only disposed, but able to fulfil his duties. In this view alone can knowledge and talents profit a man; otherwise, instruction working upon sterile memory, and talents purely mechanical, can be of no high utility.

“In order that the teacher, and particularly the master of the primary school, may make his pupils virtuous and enlightened men, it is necessary he should be so himself. Thus, that the education of a normal school, essentially practical, may completely succeed, the young candidate must possess nobleness and purity of character in the highest possible degree, the love of the true and the beautiful, an active and penetrating mind, the utmost precision and clearness in narration and style.” The board of examiners connected with our seminaries may obtain some valuable hints from the preceding extract.

Attached to every teacher's seminary should be a department for teaching the elementary branches of an English education. This is necessary that those who are preparing to teach may make a practical application of their instruction. On “practical teaching” hear Cousin. “All the studies and all the knowledge of our pupils would be fruitless, and the normal school would not fulfil the design of its institution, if the young teachers were to quit the establishment, without having already methodically applied what they had learned, and without knowing by experience what they have to do, and how to set about it.

“To obtain this result, it is not sufficient that the young men should see the course gone through under skilful masters, or that they should themselves occasionally give lessons to their schoolfellows; they must have taught the children in the annexed school for a long time, under the direction of the masters of the normal school. It is only by familiarizing themselves with the plan of instruction for each practical branch, and by teaching each for a certain time themselves, that they can acquire the habit of it without method.”

This we think very important; and whenever the states shall feel it their duty (and we trust it will be soon) to establish normal schools, the advice in the last extract ought not to be forgotten.

## SECTION VIII.

### THE GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE OF A SCHOOL.

A TEACHER who loves his school, and addresses his pupils with a smiling countenance and a pleasant tone of voice, exerts a much happier influence than he does who governs by blows and punishments. He who allures his pupils into rectitude and industry by an agreeable, winning address, holds a very different relation to them than he would have by exciting fear and using severity. It is the influence obtained over pupils by kindness and sympathy that produces the highest kind of obedience.

It is a government of goodness and affection that disciplines the moral feelings of the subjects; and it is the lively interest and tenderness felt by a teacher for the happiness and improvement of his

pupils which exert that kind of influence that is constantly carrying on a moral discipline. A teacher who has the confidence and love of his scholars may almost, if not entirely, dispense with his "rules" and his "ferules;" his government is a moral one, one that fulfils the law without seeing or knowing it.

A love of doing right, because it is right, is the motive to obedience; and the ability and habit of governing themselves are soon acquired, and the regulations of the teacher are no longer necessary. Each one now feels that his progress and reputation depend upon his own exertions, and upon his own moral discernment in perceiving what is right.

Scholars who are taught and trained in this manner govern themselves. The teacher's authority is superseded by the love of right; his business now is to improve the mind. This is the result of correct moral discipline; and this should be the government and discipline of every school.

*The very end and object of all government should be to make men govern themselves.* Just so far as government falls short in producing this effect, it is defective. Laws should so command what is right, and forbid what is wrong, as to give a moral discernment of that course of conduct which leads to the happiness of the individual. Thus, the right way being perceived, and the individual being conscious that this way produces the greatest amount of happiness, the laws which first gave this perception, and pointed out this way, are in a great measure useless and set aside. The individual now governs himself: and this should be the end of law, whether national, municipal, or that which is made for the school-room.

A teacher, instead of enforcing the observance of his laws, should be labouring to make his pupils understand what is right and what is wrong, and the certain consequences of doing right, and the natural

and inevitable consequences of doing wrong ; or in other words, there should be such a moral discipline going on, that the pupils will soon be capable and desirous of governing themselves.

Each scholar, then, will not only be jealous of his own good conduct, but of the good conduct of each member of the school. Each scholar will feel a lively interest in the order and operations of the school. He will become a part of the whole, and will feel the same general interest that the teacher feels. This interest the teacher should always secure. It will make his government easy and popular.

A teacher should govern his scholars as rational and moral beings. They are as capable of perceiving a distinction between truth and falsehood, and right and wrong, as he is—perhaps more so. After we have lived in this world of error and prejudice twenty or thirty years, our moral and intellectual powers are apt to become disordered, and deceive us. But a child is fresh from that land which has written the law of truth upon the heart, and made him capable of discerning between good and evil, and between merit and demerit.

You, as a teacher, are unfolding their mental powers, that they may reason and reflect : then give them an opportunity of exercising this reason, and of making reflections upon their actions and upon what they learn. Let them commence this work with you, and make some use of your instructions. Do not teach them that they are made to think and reflect, and at the same time treat them as though they were machines, unable to think or reason.

Let your scholars see that you *believe* they have such powers, in the exercise of which you tell them their chief dignity consists. Let the force of their desires, appetites, and passions be controlled by their reason while they remain with you, that they

may be under the same control when they are left to take care of themselves.\*

Why are children so volatile, and obdurate, and dull, and full of mischief? Is it not, in some measure, because all natural and lawful exercise of the mind is denied them? Their minds will be active, and if they are not allowed to reason, they will study to evade; if they are not permitted to see the justness of your command, is it strange that they should be obdurate? Many of your pupils will have mature judgments, and all of them unsophisticated ones; and on matters within the scope of their understandings you should appeal to them for decisions.

I know that with some scholars you must use *force*; but, in the first place, try the influence of persuasion and reason. I am aware, that it is much easier and quicker to give a *blow* than a *reason*; but one reason may secure longer obedience than five hundred blows. A government of force exists only where the eye of the teacher is resting. A government of reason is always looking at the children, and they at it. True it is, that the teacher must have authority; he is the governor of his little republic, and must be obeyed. But as far as reason can transfer this authority to the scholars, the teacher should be willing to relinquish it; *it will govern for him*.

Punishments will sometimes be found necessary. But severe punishment should be used with great care. It should have peculiar reference to the cha-

\* Our principal aim, in each kind of instruction is, to induce the young men to think and judge for themselves. We are opposed to all mechanical study and servile transcripts. The masters of our primary schools must possess intelligence themselves, in order to be able to awaken it in their pupils; otherwise, the state would doubtless prefer the less expensive schools of Bell and Lancaster.—*Cousin's Report*.

rafter of the pupil, so as not to awaken a spirit of bitterness or defiance, or dislike to study. I think that punishment, as much as possible, should be mental instead of being corporal.

But whenever they are necessary, and whatever kind may be inflicted, they should *answer their end*. The end of punishment should be to prevent a repetition of the offence; but the kind and degree of punishment that is generally awarded, and the manner in which it is usually inflicted, come far short of securing this end. The only effect of punishment, in too many cases, is the excitement of the bad passions of the pupil. And when such passions are frequently inflamed, the character is forming, and becoming fixed, under the most unhappy circumstances.

I believe that much of the malignity of men has its origin in the injudicious punishment of children. When the teacher finds it necessary to correct a scholar, he should exercise his judgment in determining the nature and the degree of punishment which the peculiarities of the individual require; he should likewise administer it in that manner which the nature of the offence, and an intimate knowledge of the character of the offender, may seem to prescribe.

There is at present a great deal of corporal punishment in our district schools; and I am afraid that but very little of it answers the end for which it should be given. The fear of doing wrong for the time, and hatred to the teacher and the school, are, too frequently, the results of corporal punishments; and I think that teachers should consider this part of school government with more care than they have hitherto done.

\* But let the masters never forget, that the severest measures of discipline should be pervaded by a sentiment of tenderness and love, which chastises only to improve.—*Cousin's Report*.



Punishments should seldom, if ever, be inflicted before the school. The fear of being laughed at, or called a fellow of "no spunk," will prevent the criminal from yielding as soon as he would otherwise do, if his pride was not touched by the presence of his associates. When the criminal is arraigned before the school, he will be less inclined to confess his fault and ask the forgiveness of the teacher.

There should be no check upon the child's disposition to yield or to make confession; on the contrary, all the circumstances should favour this disposition. The teacher should take the offenders aside, where they may be unseen and unheard, and then show them the nature of the offence, its consequences upon the school and upon its author. If he finds punishment necessary, he should administer it with calmness and affection; convincing the pupil that he is pained because his teacher loves him.

Crimes which are common to many of the scholars may be made known and corrected before the school. Such as the use of profane language, lying, quarrelling, and disrespect. These crimes the teacher should publicly reprimand. Public opinion ought to regard them in such a light, that they would be at all times, and in all places, the greatest disgrace to their authors. The teacher should frequently describe that conduct which ensures happiness and esteem, and the opposite, which brings misery and disgrace.

He should show the scholars the effect of habit, and the influence it has in prompting them to right or wrong actions. He can tell his pupils, that the best way to find out what they will be is to inquire what they are now, and that their conduct, by the time they are twenty years old, will have fixed their character for life. Instructions of this kind from the teacher are very desirable; yes, I may say, absolutely necessary.

The teacher ought to show his scholars that *he* is acting under moral obligations—that he is governed by just laws, and that *he* feels and wishes to do his duty. This will secure him obedience and respect; it will make the scholars unwilling to injure his feelings, or to give him any unnecessary trouble. The government should be impartial. The larger scholars of the school rendering the same obedience that is required of the smaller ones; the dull and the backward receiving the same attention that is given to the sprightly and more advanced.

The children of those parents who are in humble circumstances put upon the same equality with the more favoured. Justice and impartiality appearing in whatever the teacher says or does. This will secure the friendship of all, and prevent those complaints, dissatisfactions, and divisions which are now so common in our district schools.

A teacher should have the same government over himself *out of school*, that he has in school. I have seen many teachers lose the respect of their pupils by frivolous, improper conduct while out of school. This is to be lamented by all. *Inconsistency of character always destroys a man's influence*; and no one will see it sooner than a scholar when exhibited in his teacher. The scholar has been convicted of impropriety, and now will be on the watch to detect the same fault in his teacher. This should make teachers more circumspect. They may have a wise government in school, but counteract all its influence by their boyish or unsuitable conduct while out.

The government of a school should be *regular and systematical*. Children love system. They are delighted with order and regularity; and the benefit of the school will depend very much upon the teacher's having a time for every thing, and every thing in its time. Every scholar, also, should

have his place, and every one should be in his place. By such arrangements, the instructor will accomplish more in ten minutes than he would in an hour without system. The government in our district schools is not as systematical as it ought to be; many of them are miserably deficient in this important part.

For this defect there are two reasons which appear to be the main ones. The first is, in such a changing, discordant scene, it is difficult to establish and sustain order and system; and in the second place, the most of teachers have but very little system in their own thoughts and life. But I know of no employment where the want of order and system is productive of so much injury, as it is in the government of a school. Nothing, or next to nothing, can be done without them. They only can prevent confusion and much needless waste of time.

Teachers should never *threaten*. As soon as you threaten you commit yourself. You cannot exercise your judgment in the next offence, but you must punish, let the circumstances be what they may. By scolding, you show your weakness; and by threatening, your injustice to the present, and your slavery to the future.

How seldom are threats executed! The teacher does not intend to execute them at the time they are foolishly made. He makes them to frighten for a moment, but not to remember them. But is not this something more than a white lie? Is it not the very worst example for children, who are generally so prone to tell what is not true? More care, much more should be used by teachers in this part of their conduct and government.

A government should not be *severe at one time, and lax at another*. A teacher is very apt to govern as he happens to feel. If he is a little un-

well, or has met with some unpleasant circumstance, he is inclined to be hasty and severe; he does not make those allowances which he does at other times, and works off the bad humour, which has been caused by something foreign to the school, on some little offence of one of the scholars. This capriciousness renders his government unpopular, and makes the pupils suppose that their punishment is bad fortune instead of justice. They will not be willing to submit to this freakish authority, and will be more inclined to dispute than to obey. A government should always be uniform.\*

Teachers in their government should exercise much charity. They should, indeed, have that charity "which suffereth long, and is kind," and "which is not easily provoked." Those who teach will meet with many unpleasant scenes—with many provoking things; but they must learn to forgive, and at the same time to reprove with firmness, yet in love.

The government and discipline of a school should have particular regard to the *manners* of the scholars. Very little attention is given in our district schools to this important part of education. I say important, for manners are something with all, and every thing with some. I must say, and it is with reluctance, that the American people have too great a disregard (may I not almost say contempt) for what is called "politeness."

As soon as this word is mentioned to some, hypocrisy, affectation, and hollow civility dance in their fancy, and they immediately suppose that

\* Fixed laws give to an institution a steady course, protect the weaker against caprice and tyranny, prevent mistakes and precipitation, and, what is more important for the future, they show in a clear and striking manner the necessity of laws for the commonwealth, and train youth to a reasonable and willing obedience to them.

every one who is polite is insincere, a dandy, and a fellow of great pretensions, without the least worth. They think that politeness and honesty can never be united; and hence they have suspicions of every one who is not as rough and blunt as they are. Therefore they take no pains to improve their own manners, or to correct the indelicacies and clownishness of their children or associates.

The manners and address of the teacher never undergo inspection; they are probably never thought of, unless they are a little cultivated, and then, perhaps, they are set down to his disadvantage. This is not always so, but it is too often. We, as a people, have too much selfishness, too much cold independence. We are too indifferent to those little things and decencies upon which the most of our happiness is placed. In our intercourse with each other, there are a thousand attentions and civilities which greatly increase our enjoyment, and which cost us neither time nor money.

• This all know, and all acknowledge; and it is to be regretted that so little attention is paid to the manners of the children in our district schools. It is true, they are taught, in some places, to pull off their hats, and to pitch the head towards the ground when a neighbour or a stranger passes or enters the school. And this is the whole amount of their instructions.

If they obey orders in this, by making preparation for some time before the traveller comes up, and by repeating the bow or courtesy three or four times, they have learned sufficient, and are looked upon as "patterns of politeness." *Chastity of thought, and language, and graceful manners,* are seldom required. It is painful in the extreme to witness the uncouthness and vulgarity which is licensed by some teachers; for to be silent on the subject gives a license. I know that there are

many teachers who are honourable exceptions, and I wish there were more. A proper degree of attention to the convenience and happiness of others is no small virtue. It is a duty which is binding on all.

Teachers should strive to make their pupils agreeable companions, pleasing in their address, and courteous in their conversation. They should be careful to see that the intercourse of their pupils, while at school, is of this character. If such a habit is formed there, it will be natural and easy for them to be so when away from school. The teacher may do much in this branch of his duty by watching over his own manners and feelings. The children will naturally copy from him. What I have said on this subject is well meant, and I trust it will be as well received.

Teachers also may pay more attention to the language which their scholars use. Wrong pronunciation and bad grammar appear in almost every sentence. Teachers should notice this, and correct whatever may be wrong or inelegant. The scholars should be taught to express themselves with ease and propriety. It will greatly assist them in thinking correctly and forcibly, and it will prevent them from being misunderstood.

## SECTION IX.

### THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS.

AMONG all the offices and stations which men are called to fill in society, there is no one that brings greater responsibility than the teacher's. If we consider the qualifications which are requisite from the

nature and difficulties of his employment, or the *effect* of the impressions and principles which the scholars will receive from the teacher, we shall look upon his office as connected with the most fearful accountability. The teacher is placed with immortal beings, who have just commenced their existence, and who have neither the warnings of experience nor the restraints of judgment; yet are rushing forward, reckless and susceptible, at the mercy of the various causes and influences which they are daily under.

Their ignorance must be instructed, their mental faculties developed, and those opinions and principles inculcated which will fix the character for life. The pliable natures of children are moulded and shaped by their education; and this is committed to the care of the schoolmaster. I believe that instructors seldom reflect upon the extent and nature of their influence with the susceptible minds of their pupils.

They frequently assume the office of teaching, with no other consideration than that the employment will be less arduous than some other avocation, which otherwise would be more agreeable to their feelings. They perceive not the effect which all their feelings, opinions, and actions will have upon minds which are growing into character, and which will soon be placed where they will act upon other minds.

Not reflecting upon the lasting and controlling influence of their example and instructions, they do not see or feel the responsibility of their station. Thus they form and fix the characters of rational and immortal beings with as much indifference as they would manifest in raising food for the body that will quickly return to dust, or in manufacturing an article of clothing that is soon to perish with the

ments which become altogether impossible, when their place has once been occupied by perverse habits, caught from the contagion of early example, and too deeply rooted in the frame to be eradicated afterwards by any speculative conviction of the ridicule attending them.\*

Not only are bad manners caught from others, which cost us much time and expense to lay aside, but so ready are we *to do what others do*, that I think it will not be extravagant to say, that bad example has been the cause of as much evil in this world as depravity itself. We know that most of the knowledge which children possess is acquired by imitating; while young, they learn but little from precept. *Authority and imitation are the two great educators of every people.*

Thus every one who associates with children, as well as with teachers, should be careful to give their authority to such things only, as are wise, just, and good, and at the same time to lead lives which will make good models for the young to imitate. Parents, and teachers, and every adult person, have more influence upon children by example than they commonly suppose. For this reason I have said more on the principle of imitation than some may think necessary.

*Teachers are under a high responsibility, since to them, parents have committed the education of their children.* They have voluntarily undertaken to assist parents in one of their most important duties, and the parent has confided a trust in them, of the highest nature. Parents have incurred considerable expense in furnishing means for their children's education; and these means they have placed in the hands of the teacher. Whatever these may be, the teacher promises to use them for the best interest of his scholars.

Faithfulness here is expected from the employers,



as well as promised by the instructor. Industry, honesty, and a good judgment, are all requisite to make a full and faithful discharge of this engagement. Parents make many sacrifices that their children may receive an education; they wish them to become intelligent and respectable; and they feel a high interest in the improvement of their minds and morals.

But the benefit of the privileges which they give their children, and the realization of their wishes, depend, in a great measure, upon the manner in which the teacher performs what is justly expected from him. So far as he has the opportunity of preparing the child to meet the parent's hopes, he is bound to do it; and while the children are with him, he is responsible for the manner in which they improve their time.

The happiness of parents depends very much upon the character and conduct of their children. But this character and conduct the teacher has taken upon himself to form and direct. He has said,—I will qualify your children, as far as the improvement of their minds and the effect of good morals will go, to be not only skilful in their future occupations, but to be dutiful and intelligent members of the family.

Those parents, who have been privileged with a limited education only, and who are compelled to devote all their time to support their family, are obliged to trust their children's education almost entirely with the teacher. Among mechanics and agriculturists, children receive but very little instruction at home. They are sent to school from an early age, and the instructions of the schoolmaster are the only ones they receive. The consequences, arising from this system, are, first, that the child is not able to read or write, and secondly, that he is not able to do any thing else than what his father does. This is the case with the children of the poor in general. The only advantage which they derive from school is, that they learn to obey, and to do as they are bid.

Again, another r

of his children with the deepest solicitude. He is careful to check every evil propensity; he is anxious that his children imbibe good morals and receive good principles, and he brings them up to do justly, to love each other, and at all times to render strict and willing obedience. This faithful parent has high hopes of his children, for they appear promising; and, to increase their advantages, he sends them to school.

Now the teacher, in taking the care of these children, becomes deeply accountable to the parent. It is the teacher's duty to exercise that watchfulness over them, which they receive at home, lest the school should prove an injury, and not a benefit. This vigilance will be necessary, that the new associates and discipline of the school be to them a good, and not (as they are too often with children who receive this attention at home) an evil. In every circumstance the teacher is deeply responsible to the parent for the manner in which he educates his children.

*Society expects that teachers will make children and youth social, honourable, and benevolent members.* From this just and reasonable expectation of society, there is resting upon teachers a deep responsibility. The relations between the more aged members of society and those who have the care and education of the rising part, are close, and of the highest interest; for the strength and respectability of any community rest with the influence and honesty of its youth; with their virtue and industry rest its happiness and prosperity.

Wisdom, sacrifices, and virtues of the aged have conferred upon society, peace,

but these blessings must now

children and youth who are in

government and instruction

properly, then, do the

teachers' duties affect the interests of society ! How responsible are they, who have the care of those who are not only to make the future communities of the land, but who will either sustain or destroy the honour and happiness of their fathers.

We say, then, that teachers are highly accountable to society for the manner in which they educate its youth. The teacher is responsible to society, not only from having the minds and morals of the youth under his direction, but also from holding a station so favourable for making good members of the social community. His school is society in miniature. He may call forth and train all those feelings and passions which will be requisite to make good friends and neighbours in after-life.

Children, when together, exercise the same selfish or social nature that they will manifest in a more advanced age ; and from the exercises and social intercourse of the school, he may prepare them for the duties and social intercourse of society. This, certainly, greatly increases his obligations, and taken in connexion with his influence in forming the character, must place the teacher in such a relation to society that is, indeed, of high responsibility.

*Teachers are responsible to their country for the manner in which they educate their youth.* Men, generally speaking, are good or bad citizens, according to the kind and degree of education which they have received when young. The faithful teacher, who makes his scholars virtuous and intelligent, fits them for achieving or maintaining the political freedom : but he who neglects their physical and mental improvement, or inculcates false principles, is, in the highest sense of the word, doing violence to liberty.

I know of no more responsible are teachers, since only with the liberty of each into the world "that is liberty of a world, as

With him, to a great extent, rests the moral and political freedom of man. In what a responsible relation then does he stand to his country! He is forming the characters of those who will either perpetuate or destroy the free institutions of the land. He is giving that kind of education that will cause the youth of the nation to respect and sustain the blessings which our fathers have conferred, or that kind, that will disrespect a legacy which has been obtained by their valour and their blood.

The light and defence of our literary institutions; the strength and justice of our laws; the sacredness of our constitution, and the honour and greatness of our country's name, call upon every teacher of American youth *to be faithful to his trust*. They expect from him the blessings of their establishment, and the continuance of their existence. The school-houses of a nation *bestow and sustain* her liberty and glory. The American people have founded the temple of freedom on virtue and knowledge, and this foundation they expect their teachers and ministers to lay. If they are *wise, virtuous, and faithful*, the nation has nothing to fear; but if they are ignorant and immoral, American freedom will perish.

The responsibility of teachers is great from the consideration *that they will give character to future communities*. As the present generation, in a great measure, determines and fixes the character and destinies of the generations that will follow, the influence of teachers will reach beyond the present ; it will be felt on the coming generations, as up one after the other, till the last moment

ho went before us we received our  
 our opinions, our government,  
 ! these were from the teach-  
 our teachers will those  
 moral and political

character. *He who acts upon mind, takes hold of the future, and acts upon eternity. He who gives shape and character to one mind, goes wherever that mind goes, acts wherever that mind acts, and speaks whenever that mind speaks.*

How accountable, how deeply responsible, then, are those who educate and give character to youth! Teachers should think of the *nature* of what they are called to superintend—the *active immortal mind*; and they should reflect on the boundless space which their influence will go into.

Again, the responsibility of teachers is seen by reflecting, *that the happiness of each scholar, in a great measure, is in the hands of the instructor.* The Rev. Samuel R. Hall has very justly said, in his incomparable "Lectures on School-keeping," "That the teacher has the power of directing his scholars in almost any path he chooses; you may lead them to form habits of application and industry, or, by neglecting them, permit them to form those of idleness and indifference. You may win them either to a love of learning and a respect for virtue; or, by your negligence and unfaithfulness, you may suffer them to become regardless of both.

"You have the power to lead them to a cultivation of the social affections, to make them kind, benevolent, and humane; or, by your neglect, they may become the reverse of every thing that is lovely, amiable, and generous. It will be greatly in your power to assist them in learning to make nice distinctions in the examination of moral conduct, and to govern their own actions accordingly; or you may, by your unfaithfulness, suffer them to contract the habit of pursuing, regardless of consequences, every thing they desire, and opposing with temper every thing that counteracts their wishes."

And, lastly, how responsible are teachers, since *their influence will reach into the world "that is,*

*to come.*" Whether scholars, when they are called to their final account, shall receive the reward of the righteous or the punishment of the wicked, will depend very much upon the moral and religious influence of their teachers. Instructors not only form a character for this world, and one that will be estimated by men, but likewise a character for eternity, and one that will be estimated by a holy and a righteous God.

## SECTION X.

### THE TEACHER'S COMPENSATION.

THE labours of a common school teacher are arduous, difficult, and responsible; and I know of no individual in the community whose services are more necessary or valuable than those rendered by a faithful, well-qualified teacher. Those who admit these propositions (and we think every reflecting man will) agree with us, that labours at once so trying and so important should always be *well rewarded*. But are teachers adequately remunerated?—are their wages such as to encourage young men to qualify themselves for teaching?—such as to secure men who will make the profession of teaching honourable, and our schools valuable? We must say *they are not*.

Capable, faithful teachers do not receive a sufficient compensation. The common school teacher, who is employed for twelve successive months, does not receive more than eleven dollars per month. There are a few who get more than this sum, yet a greater number who receive less. Now the common labourer, who hires himself to the farmer by

the month, gets as much as the teacher ; and the wages of the mechanic are double the wages of the teacher.

It is a very common practice with young men who teach during the winter, to labour on the farm during the summer : and they make this change because the summer wages of the farm *are more* than the wages of the summer school. *There is no employment among the American people* (what a reproach to our intelligence and affluence!) *which receives less pay than elementary teaching.* Yes, there is no service so menial, no drudgery so degrading, which does not demand as high wages as we are now giving for that which is the life of our liberty, and the guard of our free institutions.

Our leading intelligent citizens perceive this fact, and they have published it, and done much to make the lamentable truth known and felt by every parent and guardian in this republic ; yet, but few, very few consider it ; for even now, many honest men think that teachers have an easier life, are better paid, and better treated than any other labouring class in the community. The great majority of the people do not see that they give no extra advantages whatever to those who are giving the nation its education and its character.

A young man cannot afford to expend one cent in making preparation to teach a common school, for his wages, as a teacher, will be no more than those of a common labourer. All that he pays for knowledge requisite to teach a school, is lost, in a pecuniary point ; for if he did not know how to read, his mere muscular effort would demand as high wages as he will be able to get, after spending two or three years, and as many hundred dollars, in qualifying himself to teach.

The little compensation which parents are disposed to give their instructors, offers no inducement

to young men\* to make any preparation for teaching.\* The consequence is, that a great number of our school-houses are furnished with incompetent teachers. Parents complain loudly of this deficiency; but they seldom perceive the cause of the ignorance and inexperience of teachers.

They never reflect upon the necessary expenses which an individual must incur by preparing himself to teach, and upon their own *unwillingness to pay an adequate compensation* to those who are qualified. Parents cannot reasonably expect excellence and ability if they are unwilling to reward such qualities. If they are disposed to pay teachers no more than they now pay them, they must expect their teachers to have the deficiencies which they now complain of.

But few parents perceive the bad effects of giving low wages to teachers. The evils arising from this ill-judged parsimony are numerous and destructive. It prevents young men from obtaining proper qualifications—it makes teachers indifferent and unfaithful in their employment—it makes them dislike their business, and anxious for some other occupation—it puts men in our schools who are lazy and ignorant—it makes teaching a temporary business for a few idle months, and it makes the teacher's profession low and disreputable. These are some of the evils which make our schools, in a great measure, useless to what they might be, and evils which arise from giving teachers too small a compensation.

*If parents would give teachers a higher com-*

\* If you would have good masters, you must first of all ensure them a maintenance. The Prussian law expresses itself on this head in the most solemn manner. "It is our firm will," says the king, in whose name it speaks, "that in the maintenance of every school, this be regarded as the most important object, and take precedence of all others."—*Cousin's Report.*



*persuasion, it would encourage young men to qualify themselves for instructing.* In the United States men pursue science and literature for a livelihood. There are but very few whose circumstances are such as to permit them to seek knowledge merely to gratify a love of letters. The most are obliged to make use of the attainments they have made as a means to give them a support. No one will improve his education beyond what is required by the common business of life, unless he knows that these extra acquisitions will be the means, hereafter, of giving him higher wages for his services. He cannot afford it.

If he prepares himself to teach others, the taught must be willing to pay him for that preparation; for these previous expenses will not be incurred unless there is a certainty of a future return. If the wages of teachers were higher, the candidates for this profession could afford to make a proportionate preparation for this office. And hence, if parents would improve the character and usefulness of their schools, they must be willing to indemnify teachers for the extra expenses necessarily incurred by making suitable attainments. Young men will never qualify themselves to teach *until they see this disposition in parents.*

But as soon as a good education is honoured and rewarded in a teacher, acquisitions extensive and suitable will be made. Reward the profession of teaching as liberally as we do the profession of law or physic, and the teacher will be as liberal in his preparation as the lawyer or the physician. If we have poor teachers, it is because we give poor pay; and if we would have better teachers, we must pay better. Parents have it in their own power, as we trust has been clearly shown, to raise the character and qualifications of teachers; and we shall now show that it would be for the parent's interest to do so.

In the first place, it would be the parent's interest to employ qualified teachers, *because it would save tuition money*. Parents pay more money for the education of their children by employing incompetent instructors, than they would do by employing teachers who are competent. In the affairs of life, parents generally perceive that the cheapest article is commonly the dearest; and those of more reflection perceive that this is always the case in the article of teachers.

A child, to obtain the same amount of knowledge, must attend to the instructions of a poor teacher three times as long as would be necessary with a good teacher. Thus, if parents do give but little to the *teacher*, they pay dearly for their children's *instructions*. If they would secure the services of a qualified teacher, by giving him double the price of present wages, their school tax would be one-third less than it now is. We think it is clear, that even in a mere pecuniary point, it would be for the interest of parents to give a suitable compensation to competent instructors.

In the second place, qualified teachers would promote the parent's interest *by saving their children's time*. Scholars under a good teacher will be as far advanced at fourteen years of age as they will be at twenty under a poor teacher. The time between fourteen and twenty could be spent in learning a useful trade, or in assisting the parent in the maintenance of the family. When children arrive at fourteen years of age, they should begin to acquire habits of industry; and at this age their services begin to be of considerable value to the parent.

If the child is sent to school at a proper age, a faithful, qualified teacher will have given it a good English education at fourteen. The child is then prepared to engage in some useful employment. But under the present state of things, children must

be sent to school more or less till they are twenty, and then they have but a very limited education; not so good a one as they might have at fourteen if properly instructed.

Parents do not perceive the time which is lost by employing incapable instructors. The time which the children would gain, if sent to a proper teacher while young, would be worth much more than the little extra expense of a good school. Thus it would be much the cheapest for parents to engage the services of teachers who have prepared themselves for their profession.

In the third place, qualified teachers, who would be able to govern correctly, and facilitate the progress of children, *would save the parent much expense in books, paper, maps, slates, &c.* The school stationery of a large family amounts to a considerable item in the course of a year. Parents know that these incidental expenses are quite a tax; and every one would be glad to have them less. Now, the more rapid the improvement in writing, the smaller the quantity of paper, pens, and ink, which the child will require; the faster the scholar learns to read, the fewer the books which will be necessary; and the quicker the pupils learn their geography and arithmetic, the less the expense of maps, slates, &c.

Thus teachers, who could facilitate the progress of the scholars, would save the parent much expense in the stationery of the school-room; and hence the parent's interest would be promoted by employing teachers whose wages must be higher indeed, but whose qualifications would be such, that they would always be found the cheapest.

Lastly, (and this every one will think a very important consideration,) teachers who have prepared themselves for their profession are the most profitable for parents to employ, *because they will then*

*know that their children will be well educated.* This confidence in the instructor will prevent much care and anxiety on the part of the parent. Children are forming a character every moment; and their education, of some kind or other, is constantly going on; this parents know, and it gives them great pleasure to reflect, that their offspring are directed by the skilful, moral influence of a fit teacher. It likewise gives the parents pleasure to reflect that their children's progress in knowledge is *thorough and useful.*

With a cheap, unqualified teacher; the pupils spend most of their valuable time in learning what they must some day or other unlearn, if they ever make studious, correct scholars. Parents frequently pay cheap instructors more for teaching their children what is wrong or useless, or must be forgotten, than would be necessary to give them a good knowledge of elementary studies, under a suitable teacher. This useless expense, bad instruction, and slow progress, would never occur to give the parent distress and anxiety, if a faithful, confidential teacher was always engaged. But all these evils the parent must expect, if he is penurious and short-sighted enough to hire a cheap, worthless schoolmaster.

Again, it is common for parents to have not a little trouble in persuading their children to go to school. Now this unwillingness to attend school, manifested by the child, does not arise from its dislike to study, but from the parents having placed an ignorant, repulsive man in the school-house. The whole exercises of the school are made so unpleasant and disagreeable, that the pupil heartily hates knowledge, and *every place where it is taught.*

It would save children much unhappiness, and parents much labour, if an engaging, accomplished teacher was employed; one who would make the school-room the most delightful and profitable room

they could ever enter. But before men can understand the operations of the youthful mind, and impart useful knowledge in an attractive, simple manner, they must be well educated, and well instructed in the art of teaching; and this will not be, until parents reflect, and perceive, that it is for *their interest* to pay wages which will induce men to make the necessary preparations.

If parents would increase the teacher's wages, *they would raise the character of the profession.* The compensation for teaching is so small, that accomplished, well-educated men can find other employments much more profitable than teaching. Thus, those who would become useful instructors, and an honour to the profession, are excluded, unless some of these men are willing to make a sacrifice; and our school-houses are left to be supplied by the necessitous and unqualified.

Indolent, immoral, and ignorant men are often employed to teach our common schools: these disgrace the calling, and have made the saying, "as lazy and conceited as a schoolmaster," familiar everywhere. Now, what is it that draws into our schools the worthless, and excludes the worthy? What is it that prevents men from becoming capable teachers? What is it that makes teaching disreputable? Parents, is it not your sordid avarice, your own shortsightedness, and your cruelty to your own children? By offering an adequate compensation to teachers, you could demand learning, talent, and elegance.

By a highminded, generous attention to your children's education, you may make the profession of teaching take an equal rank in usefulness and respectability with the lawyer's and the divine's. **YOU MAY MAKE OUR LITERARY MEN FEEL IT THEIR HIGHEST AMBITION TO BECOME GOOD SCHOOLMASTERS.** The honour of the profession of teaching rests with you; you can continue its low con-

dition, or you may raise it to honour and respectability.

*Parents cannot receive the advantages of the school system, unless they employ qualified teachers.* Legislation in many of the states has done much for the education of children. Large school funds have been raised to assist the parents, and a liberal system has been organized to give union of action and instruction to the inhabitants of every district. Through the vigilance of the public officers, these princely funds may have an equitable distribution; and the school system be put in active operation.

The wisdom of legislation, the watchfulness and counsel of learning and talent, are ready to assist and protect our schools. The great thing that is wanting is the *co-operation of parents*. Unless parents are willing to unite their efforts with legislation and official counsel, they will receive but little aid from the government. Great assistance, indeed, may be had from the school fund and the school system, if parents will make this active, liberal co-operation; but without this obligatory exertion on the part of parents, the state can do them but little good.

It is to be regretted that so great a part of the school fund is lost by being squandered on unqualified schoolmasters. Parents, by hiring such teachers, pervert the benevolence of the state, and exclude themselves from those advantages which the government wishes to give them. If the funds were bestowed on worthy, well-qualified teachers, the inhabitants of the district would be greatly assisted, and the spirit and intention of the school law would be fully answered.

But the public funds are lost when they support men who are rather an injury to the schools than a benefit; and the parents voluntarily deprive themselves of that aid which is so generously offered to

all. We do hope that parents hereafter will feel unwilling to pervert the government funds by squandering them on unworthy, incompetent teachers ; and that they will be disposed to receive the advantages of these funds by engaging such teachers as the *law intended the funds should support.*\*

And finally, *to employ well-qualified teachers is the only way for parents to increase the usefulness and raise the character of district schools.*

Parents may employ men to recommend the best systems of government, and the best methods of teaching ; and they may purchase the most improved school books for their children ; they may be attentive to their children's education at home ; and they may do all that can be done, and after all, if there is an unfaithful, disqualified teacher in the school-house, all that is done, is lost, worse than lost ; for they have given their children the means of perverting privileges, of learning error, and of confirming bad habits.

Let me, then, again say to parents, if you would act according to your own interest, even in a pecuniary point ; if you would encourage young men to qualify themselves for teaching ; if you would have your children well educated ; if you would have them love knowledge ; if you would raise the character of the teacher's profession ; if you would make it the highest ambition of literary men to become good schoolmasters ; if you would receive the advantages of the school system, and obey the spirit of the school act, be willing to give such wages as will secure the services of *faithful, well-qualified teachers.*

\* The excellence of a school depends entirely upon the master ; the choice of the master is therefore a matter of the first importance.—*Cousin's Report.*

## SECTION XI.

A TEACHER SHOULD MAKE HIS SCHOOL PLEASANT.

CHILDREN and youth are governed almost entirely by their feelings. They are controlled neither by the reason of maturer years, nor the habits of advanced age. With the young, all is freshness and curiosity ; and nothing is so likely to interest them as novelty and change. A teacher who has not only to govern his scholars, but to interest them, who must amuse as well as instruct, should understand the motives and principles of action in the youthful mind, that he may be able to rouse it into activity, and also to give it its proper direction.

Something new will always please and excite the youthful mind. This truth the teacher may take advantage of, to awaken dulness and indifference : but he must, however, guard against the love of novelty, that he may form habits of fixing the attention on some one subject till the mind has mastered it. And here teachers find some perplexity. The scholars become impatient, before they are thorough.

The teacher wishes to continue the interest, and to please his pupils by letting them advance, but knows that it is for their good (although he is unable to convince them of it) to make slower progress. He will have to put a strong check upon this ardent passion for something new, and yet give it sufficient latitude to keep up a deep exciting interest. To preserve the mind in this proper balance requires nice observation, much ingenuity, and close reflection.

Those who are under the government of their feelings are greatly influenced by *first impressions*.



The teacher should be careful to have these favourable. His first appearance among the pupils should be winning and friendly. If he should be ill-natured and repulsive at first, it will take a long time to eradicate the unfavourable opinions. The teacher ought to meet his scholars with a smile, and convince them that he feels a deep interest in their improvement and happiness. He should not at first repel them by instantaneous harshness and severity.

If a teacher loves his school, he will make it pleasant; if the duties are a source of enjoyment to him, his government and instruction will be likely to please his pupils. If he looks pleasant, the scholars will. I know of nothing that will produce this kindness, attention, and good-nature in the teacher, but a sincere love for his employment. Men are generally agreeable and efficient when they labour where they feel an interest and a delight; and, on the contrary, disagreeable and inefficient in stations which they do not like.

No one should teach except he can sympathize with his pupils, and feel happy in his duties. He should be free with his scholars, but not trifling—easy, but not familiar—sociable, without levity—a companion, and yet a respected teacher, and a beloved ruler. He should possess dignity, without stiffness or affectation, and be disposed to temper justice with mercy, and duty with love.

The teacher, to make his school pleasant, should strive *to create friendship and good-will among his scholars*. The members of the school must meet each other every day, and spend the greater part of their time in each other's society. In this close and constant intercourse, the bad feelings will be frequently aroused, and it will be necessary to have a large share of good-nature and a forgiving spirit to prevent strife and hatred from rendering the school association, a nourisher of the evil passions.

It is the teacher's duty to suppress the unhappy, destructive passions, and to cultivate the sociable and the benevolent. He can perform this duty by producing love and friendship among his pupils while they are associated during the hours of school. It is said that the seed of evil and good are planted by schoolmasters and mothers. Their negligence sows many of those that are evil.

I think that it will not be doubted that many of the most malignant passions of men sprang up, and received the most fearful strength in the broils and quarrels with schoolmates. How necessary is it, then, that the teacher should keep a watchful eye over the intercourse of his pupils, and exert all his powers in preventing the exercise of the selfish nature, and in developing and strengthening the social and benevolent feelings.

But very few teachers perceive the influence which scholars have upon each other; and many, very many, are altogether indifferent respecting the nature of this influence, whether it be good or bad. From this negligence and indifference in teachers; the growth of the evil passions more than counterbalances the benefit of the best instructions. But, if the teacher is disposed, he has the opportunity, while strengthening the mind and furnishing it with knowledge, of cultivating the social and moral nature of his scholars; and this to such an extent as to give them governing feelings and principles for life.

His school is the world in miniature; the same fears and hopes, prejudices and partialities, passions and strifes, ascendancy and submission that we see in the greater world. Thus the teacher has the opportunity for preparing his pupils for that more extended sphere of life which will call into action the same feelings which were exercised in the more limited.

He may, by regulating his scholars' intercourse

with each other, fit them for becoming useful; honoured members of society, or for destroying the peace and happiness of others, by the exercise of those appetites and passions which his negligence permitted to acquire strength and grow while at school. Let him, then, labour to make his scholars love each other; and to feel that they were made social beings for the purpose of making each other happy.

The teacher can render his school pleasant, by making the *acquisition of knowledge the means of happiness*. The young mind is delighted with the discovery of something new; and it has pleasure in mere action, independent of the knowledge which this action secures. The very labour necessary to obtain knowledge, if properly directed, will afford enjoyment to the mind. The teacher, then, should take advantage of this love of action, and this desire of knowledge, and make them assist in rendering his school agreeable.

I know of no higher enjoyment to the mind, than its own exercise in finding out new truths. The reason that study is made such a task, and the exercises of the school become so irksome, is, the efforts of learners are improperly directed, and the instructions of the teacher ill adapted. The scholars perceive no certainty, nothing definite nor distinct; they know not that they make any advance or any discovery. They make nothing their own.

The teacher's instructions are not understood, or are not of the right kind for the age and attainments of the pupil, and consequently possess no interest. Hence the dislike which children and youth have for study. But the mind was made to love knowledge as much as the eye loves light, or the lungs air, or the stomach food. And the mind has a much more exquisite relish in acquiring knowledge than the sense of taste has in preparing food for the

stomach. The mind loathes knowledge sometimes, because it is offered in an unpleasant manner; just as the palate loathes food that has been badly cooked.

But when the teacher prepares the mind for the reception of truth, and then instructs according to the natural relations between mind and knowledge, the scholar will ask for no higher delight than that which he finds in his lesson. How often have I seen the countenances of children beam with interest, and speak with eloquence, the gladness of their hearts when something new had been related. It is a pleasure beyond all other pleasures to instruct the young mind in such a state.

And I know of no labour which affords so much happiness as that of the teacher's, if he is only prepared for his business, and loves it. And I know of no place that may be made happier than the school-room, if the scholars study rightly and are properly instructed. The mind is so formed that the teacher may make the acquisition of knowledge the highest and most ennobling enjoyment that the scholar is capable of receiving.

He may thus make the school-room the most desirable spot that the children visit; and their school exercises the most pleasant and agreeable of any that they engage in. I know that many teachers are so disqualified, and the systems of instruction so defective, that but few scholars are blessed with this skilful and happy treatment; but this does not disprove the assertion. We think that whoever will study the nature of the mind, and perceive the relations between it and truth, will acknowledge what we have said to be true. If teachers are sceptical, I shall only solicit that they make the experiment.

A teacher may make his school pleasant by *timely and agreeable recreations*. The mind (and particularly the youthful mind) needs relief after close application, even if it should continue

but a short time. If this relief is afforded in the way of innocent amusement, it brings to the mind a pleasure that it never receives from uniform thoughtlessness. There is pleasure in mental exercise; and there is pleasure, too, in refreshing the mind with proper diversions.

The teacher should study the abilities of the mind, that he may know when it is weary with effort, and when to afford it amusement by relaxation. There is exquisite happiness in unbending the mind after severe application; and the teacher who understands human nature will take advantage of this principle of the mind, and make it one of the agreeable exercises of the school. He will connect with the school, not only the labour and the toil, but also the amusement and the rest.

Many teachers mistake, and make their scholars uneasy and unhappy by requiring them to remain too long in one position, or over a particular lesson in which they can feel no interest. Action, and almost continual action, seems natural to the young; but teachers forget this principle, and compel their scholars to do violence to their nature. This makes them restive; and if not allowed open action, they will gratify this propensity by sly, deceitful manoeuvres.

Proper and timely diversion would prevent this secret mischief, which, if detected, will be followed by punishment; and it would likewise prevent that listlessness and sleepiness which is so epidemic in primary schools. The teacher should see that the play exercises of his pupils are of a proper character and agreeable. It not unfrequently happens that the larger boys, to show their strength, or gratify their love of tyranny, intrude upon the rights and pleasures of the smaller ones, and spoil their sports, and make the condition of the weaker very uncomfortable.

The teacher should know that each one has his rights and his share in the sport. Many who are awkward or bashful, or perhaps not quite so sprightly as others, have been shunned or abused till their spirits are broken, and their feelings embittered against every thing connected with the school. Such the teacher should take by the hand, and show them that protection and tenderness which their misfortune demands. They may thus be saved, and made, perhaps, the brightest ornaments of society. The teacher should always be solicitous that the hours of recreation be spent in such a manner that *every one* shall be pleased.

The teacher may make his school pleasant by *simplifying the studies, and by presenting his instructions in an attractive form.* Scholars soon acquire a disrelish for their studies, and a dislike to the duties of the school, if their lessons appear blind and unintelligible. If their studies are above the comprehension, they will be a task only to weary and puzzle the mind, and in the end cause the scholar to hate knowledge, and all the means by which it is attained.

That this is too often the case is the reason why scholars "go tardily to school." Also, when the teacher renders assistance, his manners may be so unpleasant that the scholar will hate instruction, because he has been offended by the instructor; or, perhaps, the teacher performs his duties as a mechanical task, perfectly indifferent to the interest of the school.

If this is the case, the scholar will of course suppose that there is no pleasure to be found in the school-room. But if the studies are made plain and intelligible, (which, from the present imperfection in school-books, must be the work of the teacher,) and the manners of the teacher affectionate and winning, the school-room and its duties will present

to the pupils the highest kind of enjoyment, and cause them to estimate the worth of their school privileges according to their proper value.

Children beg to stay away from school, and rejoice when they have passed beyond their school-days, because they always felt miserable when under the requirements of the teacher. The school-room was made a place of involuntary confinement, and its duties the worst kind of chains. No wonder that children incur correction twice a day by indolence or by playing truant; but the teacher may change this unhappy state of things, and make the pupils as eager to meet, as they are now to shun him. He may make the children plead to go to the school, instead of running truant when they have been sent.

The teacher should obtain the *love and confidence of his scholars*. Without these, his labours will be very disagreeable, and almost useless. If he does not possess these, the scholars will take every advantage, and render the teacher's labours doubly arduous. The teacher will find no requital for his efforts and anxieties, so pleasing and acceptable as the love and confidence of his scholars; and they will lighten his burden more than any thing else. The scholars, too, are pleased when they can carry their troubles and their difficulties to one they love, and possesses their confidence.

Scholars want some one to answer their questions; and it is always gratifying to receive light on those subjects about which the mind is in doubt. The teacher, then, who has the confidence of his pupils, can make them attached to him by enlightening their ignorance and gratifying their curiosity. The teacher should convince his pupils that he is their friend—that his instructions may be made their greatest blessing; and that he heartily wishes to improve their minds and purify their hearts.

He should convince them that the cultivation of

the mind, and the practice of virtue, are the only things that can make them ornaments and blessings to society; and he should show them that their school privileges are for this purpose. If he is successful in this, he will make them love the school and its teacher. It should be the *constant aim and object* of the instructor to make learning pleasing and useful, and his school attractive and agreeable. He should love his profession, and strive to make every one happy that may be committed to his care.

## SECTION XII.

### THE BEST METHOD OF TEACHING SPELLING AND READING.

CHILDREN may be taught the names of the letters soon after they are able to pronounce them. The names of these signs or characters may be learned by the infant mind as soon as it learns the names of its parents, its pictures, its toys, or the name of the cat or the dog. The child commences acting and learning from the first moment of its existence, and soon acquires a knowledge of the names and some of the qualities of the objects with which it comes in contact.

If infants could have the letters in large size on strips or blocks of pasteboard, or on some small articles which they might be permitted to handle, and which might be presented in connexion with pictures of animals, they would soon learn and pronounce the names of the letters, in the same way that they learn and pronounce the names of any of the signs or objects they first meet with. Thus, by



bringing the letters under the notice of infants in the form of amusement or in close connexion with their playthings, they are early and unconsciously learned, without loss of time on the part of the parent or child.

The letters are learned, too, not as an unpleasant task, (which is always the case both with teacher and child if not learned when young,) but as a desirable exercise. Infants, it is well known, are fond of exercising their little organs of speech, and parents are pleased with these promising efforts, and are always heard pronouncing names to be repeated by the delighted little prattler; and quite young children manifest pleasure in noticing the objects which may be selected for their attention.

Now, the names which the parent pronounces to teach the child to articulate, may be the names of the letters of the alphabet; and among the objects which are selected to busy and amuse the child, may be the letters of the alphabet. If this were so, parents would find that what is necessary to know was learned, as it were, insensibly and with delight, and taught without labour.

If this is not done by the negligent or absent parent, and the child is sent to school ignorant of its alphabet, the teacher may perform the task in a few days, and in a pleasant manner, though in a very different one from that which is generally adopted in our common schools. The usual method of teaching children their letters, is to make them stand by the side of the master, and say A-eh, B-eh, C-eh, D-eh, E-eh, and so on to the end of the row, at most but three or four times a day. If there are three or four children by the side of the master, for the purpose of *saying down* their letters, but one is required to look on at the same time. In this way, children spend from three to four months in learning the letters of the alphabet.

One mode of teaching children their letters, which has always been found pleasant and successful, is, holding up in the sight of all the children two or three letters of considerable size, and whose union spells the name of some familiar object. For example, let the letters O X, standing under the picture of an ox, be shown to the children. The names of the letters are pronounced by the teacher, and by the children in concert after him. When the names of these two signs are known to the children, the teacher may tell them a story about the ox.

By being interested with the *idea* which the letters are connected with, it will be almost certain that the children remember their names. The two letters may then be given to each of the children, who return to their seats, pleased with the signs which have been connected with such a pleasing *idea* or story. After a suitable interval the teacher may examine them, and if the names of the letters are remembered, they may be taken away, with a promise of showing them others, in connexion with a picture and a story, in a short time.

The teacher again asks the attention of the children, and shows them the three letters b, o, y; one of them the same they had in the first lesson, that he may try the memory. The picture of a boy is seen over the letters; and after the children have learned the names of the two signs b, y, the teacher relates a story of a little boy he once knew or heard of. The children return to their seats with the two letters b, and y.

This method of teaching the alphabet demands but a few moments of time from the teacher, and makes the employment delightful to himself, for he sees the young minds before him taking their first steps in knowledge, and at the same time their little features lighted up with joy in their new enterprise. In one week's time he may make every child fa-

miliar with all its letters. How much time, labour, impatience, and compulsion on the part of the teacher, and dislike, fretting, and hatred on the part of the pupil might be saved, if instructors would permit children to obtain knowledge *in* school in the same manner that Nature teaches them *out* of it!

After the child is able to give the name without hesitation to each letter in the alphabet, it should begin to learn the powers of letters, when united in syllables. Here teachers and scholars find difficulty; and here many errors and bad habits, which go with the child in all its after-studies and performances, take their origin. The powers of letters change with their connexion and position. From this circumstance many of the letters have several sounds, and some of them more than one hundred different, distinct sounds or powers.

The child cannot perceive this great variety, nor give to the letters of the syllable those particular sounds, which their connexion or position, or the arbitrary standard of pronunciation, may require. This can be done only after long study—after much attention to the etymology of the language; yet to some degree the child is required to do this when it knows merely the names of the letters.

The difficulty is in distinguishing and placing these different sounds. The child sees that the letters, by being brought together in syllables, have changed their names; for to the child the name of the letter is its sound. To obviate this difficulty, and to take away this uncertainty in the mind of the child respecting the correct sound of the letter it may be pronouncing, teachers should select a number of dissyllables, in each of which the letters have the same sound.

When the child has learned to pronounce these, it has acquired one of the powers of these letters. After this, syllables of three and four letters may be

spelled and pronounced by the child. The letters of these syllables should have the same powers they formerly had when standing in dissyllables. The pupil will find these words easy and uniform. After a proper time is spent on these simple lessons, let syllables be given to the child, where some of the letters have a different power.

When the pupil has learned some of the most simple and common powers of the letters, when united into syllables, let him unite these syllables and form words. In forming words, many teachers permit a serious and lasting error. Children are allowed to call the names of the letters, without dividing the word into syllables, and pronouncing each syllable as it proceeds. The child is not better qualified to pronounce the word after it has named the letters, without dividing them into syllables and pronouncing them, than it was when uttering the first letter of the word.

The habit of naming the letters without pronouncing the syllables and *uniting them as the pupil proceeds through the word*, disqualifies the pupils from making any use of their knowledge of spelling, or of helping themselves at any time in ascertaining the correct pronunciation of a strange or large word. If children were accustomed to exercise their ingenuity in dividing the word into syllables, and to give the proper pronunciation to these syllables, they would seldom find any difficulty with strange or long words: but if they are permitted to pass through the word, and only name its letters, they will make little or no real progress, but confirm the worst of all habits.

How seldom do we find a teacher who does not permit this evil! I do not know when I have heard a child read who has in this thing been correctly taught. By allowing this error, the teacher greatly increases his own labour; for the pupil must

be constantly assisted—he cannot help himself, but is as dependent on others for the sound of the word as if he had never learned the letters.

There is another error in our schools which is the cause of so much bad spelling in the business of after-life. The error is in learning and *correcting* with one sense what in nature and practice belongs to another sense. Children in school correct their spelling by the sense of hearing. The teacher pronounces the word, and from the sound the pupils are required to spell it. After the ear has been trained for a number of years in this way, the pupil will spell nearly every word which his teacher gives him; yet this very same pupil, when at home, writing a letter to some friend, will spell almost every word wrong.

Now, what is the reason of this accuracy in one place and incorrectness in the other. It is this, when at home the words appear, not through the sense of hearing, (the sense which has been educated, and always applied to as the corrective,) but through the sense of seeing. The pupil has not been accustomed to judge whether words are spelled correctly or not by their appearance on paper; and the false spelling, not coming under the trial of the ear, escapes the unskilful observance of the eye.

The origin of the evil being discovered, it remains that we apply a remedy. Let the pupils, while receiving the words from the teacher, write them out on slates. After a number of words are given and written out, let the pupils interchange slates, and examine and correct each other's spelling. By this method the sense of seeing is educated and made a judge. The eye has the words before it—sees their appearance when incorrectly spelled and their just and natural appearance when rightly spelled. This same office the eye would be ready and able to per-

form when at home writing a letter to a friend, and bad spelling would be detected.

The teacher should confine his pupils but a short time to words marshalled into ranks, as they stand in the columns of the spelling-book, without conveying one idea, or any meaning whatever. . *There is too much mere verbiage in our district schools.* Children are confined to these unmeaning, unconnected words for two or three years. Teachers should see the folly and the tyranny of this; they have seen the difficulty; for it is with great labour that they keep the minds of the pupils on their lessons.

As soon as children have learned some of the powers of letters, and have some facility and correctness in joining syllables into words, they should be permitted to read easy sentences. These sentences should be composed of words of one or two syllables, and contain a familiar and pleasing idea. Now, for the first time, the child begins to feel

\* Having worse than lost five or six years in the nursery, —having passed the practicable season of moral training, with all our natural faults about us, tempers unregulated, pride and vanity decidedly pampered, and selfishness aggravated, we were sent to school to LEARN TO READ. That there is some improvement in schools, it would be great injustice not to acknowledge; but few *adults* can say that more than mere reading was in their first school instruction vouchsafed to them. Even yet no attempt is made to direct aught the natural appetite of the young to know. Reading is a useful instrument of knowledge, but it is gross ignorance to call it knowledge itself. Even at an age earlier than that of our “English school,” the faculties ardently crave their natural food—knowledge. The infant purveys, in some degree, for itself, to the great reproach of its unenlightened instructors. At school, these knowledge-craving faculties have little or nothing done for them; on the contrary, their natural neglect of the school-book, the result of their preference of something else much more instructive as well as delightful, was punished as idleness and frivolity; and we left our first school as we went to it, with scarcely any addition to our knowledge.—*Simpson.*

pleased with its studies: all before this has been unintelligible signs and combinations of signs. But now it finds these signs *conductors of thought*—of something that instructs and pleases. The child is now gratified with its book, for the book has an interest within itself sufficient to draw and fix the attention.

At present there are a few books which are simple without being silly, and well adapted to children. These should be put into their hands. After the pupils are familiar with the language and contents of these books, others containing sentences more complicated, and words composed of a greater number of syllables, should be given to them.

This is far from being the case in our common schools. The universal practice in these neglected places of learning is in the first place to keep the child fastened to unmeaning words for two or three years, and then to put books into his hands which a graduate of one of our colleges can scarcely understand, and perhaps, is not sufficiently learned to appreciate. When the child can pronounce words of two syllables without spelling them, it is put into the “English Reader.” A fit book for a literary man, but entirely unfit for children.

If the pupils at this stage of learning are not so fortunate as to be exalted into this “class of honour,” they are privileged by reading in the back part of the spelling-book, or in the *Columbian Orator*, reading equally as unintelligible as that in the *English Reader*. Thus the child, from the time it commences going to school till its parents require its constant labour at home, spells and reads, writes and rehearses words, and sentences of words, and whole volumes of words, without even thinking of obtaining one clear, distinct, useful idea from them.

The child never thinks of being questioned about that which it has just read. If a question of this

nature should be put, the reader would be as incapable of answering as he would be after reading hieroglyphics. The pupil at school does not suppose that books are read because they have a meaning either to amuse or to instruct, but because they have words to be pronounced and sentences to be cadenced or emphasized. His whole aim consequently is, not to find out the meaning of what he reads, but to finish his verse without "missing a word."

Here we discover the cause of so many blundering, unnatural, unaffecting readers. Imagine the effect of reading what we did not understand for even one week upon ourselves. It would unfit us for any impressiveness, either in tone or emphasis. But the youth in our schools are brought up, from infancy till the time they "finish their education," to read what they are not required, or even expected, to comprehend.

It is no wonder that the tone of voice is so unsuitable to the sentiment, the emphasis so improperly placed, and the whole manner so artificial and unnatural. We do think that nearly all of the bad habits which we are obliged to witness and excuse, both in private and public readers, proceed from this mechanical, indolent practice of reading during our childhood and youth what we do not understand.\*

If this be so, and we think no one who will go into our schools and question the scholars concern-

\* Hitherto education has been conducted too much on the principle of looking at the world only out of the window of the school and the college, and teaching the names of the beings and things therein contained, in a variety of languages, to the neglect of the study of the beings and things themselves; whereas man, as a creature destined for action, fitted to control nature to some extent, and, beyond this, left to accommodate his conduct to its course, requires positive knowledge of creation, its elements and laws, and has little use for words which go beyond the stock of his ideas.—*Combe's Lectures*.



ing that which they have just read will doubt it, we have found the cause of that defective reading which so often offends the hearers and disgraces the readers. We say, then, never let children or youth read what they do not comprehend, or that in which they feel no interest. Let books be put into their hands which are level with their capacities.

Such as contain information which may be gratifying for them to receive; books which treat of subjects with which it will be useful for them to become acquainted; and such that have motives sufficient within themselves to make the young eager to peruse them. Let an instructive story be told in a simple, chaste, forcible style; or some of Nature's handiworks be described in a plain, natural, and speaking language; or the application of some of the sciences to the practical purposes of life, illustrated in a simple, clear, intelligent manner; or the biography of some exemplary youth; or any proper subject whatever, which children and youth can sympathize with and feel a lively interest in.

If our school-books were of this nature, we should hear but very little bad reading. Who of us ever thinks of correcting a child in its pauses, emphasis, or tones of voice, when we hear it in animated conversation with one of its play mates? *Let the child read what it can understand and feel an interest in, and it will read as correctly as it converses.*

We say then, again, (for we do think this great evil of compelling children to pronounce words for years, to which they attach no kind of meaning whatever, too much neglected,) never let children read what they do not understand. If there are words in the lesson of which they do not know the meaning, let the dictionary, or the attached glossary, or the teacher define them. Never let the young reader pronounce a word without perceiving the meaning the author attached to it.

The teacher should frequently question his reading class on what has just been read, that he may know how far they have comprehended their author, and ascertain what meaning they connect with the individual words. If we should ask adults, and even liberally educated men, to define some words of the most common use, they would hesitate, and probably be unable to give any thing like a correct definition. In this, the systems of instruction in all of our literary institutions are miserably defective.

Educated men are in the constant habit of using words to which they attach a connective meaning indeed obtained from usage, but to which they would be unable to give a concise, correct definition. This evil is universal in our primary schools, and is seen to a greater or less extent in all our higher institutions up to the professional college. It is no wonder that men make such an improper choice of words, that they use so many which are equivocal, and that they are so frequently misunderstood. Their ignorance of the correct meaning of words does not permit them to select such as express what they intend to communicate.\*

\* The term "educated class," as applied to the portion of our countrymen who are above manual labour, will scarcely be taken by any one to mean that they enjoy the means of education perfect, or nearly perfect. The term is relative, and certainly when compared with the manual-labour class, who have no education at all worthy the name, *we* are an educated class. But no error is more profound, or more prevalent, than the persuasion that we are an educated class in the best sense of the term. Our complacent conclusions on the subject are, however, exceedingly natural. Look, it is said, at our libraries, our encyclopedias, teeming, as they do, with knowledge in every branch of science and literature. See our chemical, mathematical, mechanical powers; with all their realized results, which seem to mould material nature to our will and render life proudly luxurious. Then turn to our classical literature, our belles lettres, our poetry, our eloquence, our polished intercourse, our refined society; consider our fine arts and elegancies; and, above all, think of our legislation, our

There is in our district schools another bad practice which gives almost every scholar very unnatural and disagreeable habits. I refer to that high, uniform pitch of voice which the young reader is sure to strike into. I do not remember that I ever heard a child read in a natural, conversational tone of voice. This is a great defect; teachers should be careful to have their pupils read in natural tones, and to have them varied according to the sentiment. Teachers seldom pay attention to articulation, and the consequence is, that but very few articulate well. It is very rarely that we hear a reader or speaker give each letter of the word its full sound. Frequently one-half of the word is dropped, or clipped, or inaudibly uttered. This defect in articulation keeps the mind constantly directed to the words, that it may make out what they are, and the attention is diverted from the subject. This practice is also very unpleasant to the ear. Teachers should make their pupils give each letter and syllable its distinct, full sound. When this is done, there is a force and meaning in the word which is never given when half uttered.

political economy, our institutions of benevolence and justice, and the gigantic combinations of our entire national system. There is much in these high-sounding claims that deceive us. We are prone to borrow from the large fund of credit we possess in the exact and physical sciences, to place the loan to the account of universal intellectual and moral attainment, and to conclude that a pitch of improvement, which enables us to travel thirty miles an hour, must comprise in it every thing else of knowledge and power. But, alas! when we look beyond the range of physical tangibilities, and, it may be, elegant literature, into the region of mental and moral relations, in short the science of man, upon which depend the wisdom of our legislation, and the soundness of our institutions and customs, what a scene of uncertainty do we see! Fixed principles in social affairs have not yet been attained. Scarcely shall we meet two individuals who are guided by the same code. Hence controversy is the *business* of the moral, and assuredly, we may add, of the religious world."—*Simpson*.

‘ If I was asked what rules I would give to the children of our common schools that they might learn to read with ease, correctness, and impressiveness, I would say, only three, and these are very simple ones. I would not explain the philosophy of the human voice; nor speak of emphasis, inflexion, or cadence; neither of pauses, accents, or intonations. But I would say, and I think it is all that is necessary to be said, *comprehend what you read,—read in a natural, conversational tone of voice, and read often.* If teachers will see that their pupils practise these three plain rules, they will have the pleasure of hearing good readers.

### SECTION XIII.

#### THE BEST METHOD OF TEACHING WRITING.

‘ It is to be regretted that our district schools furnish so small a number of good writers. But a very few who are now practising this art in our district schools will be able to execute a free, bold, and legible hand. The greater part, including almost the whole, will number their school-days and still write with a stiff, measured, ragged, scrawling, blotting hand; scarcely legible to the writers themselves, and almost impossible for any one else to make out what is intended. The youth are conscious of their deficiencies with the pen, and we seldom find them willing to use it.

The little, imperfect as it is, that they have learned, is from the want of practice soon forgotten; and many, very many of the labouring classes, by the time they have numbered thirty or thirty-five years,

are unable to write in any manner whatever. Others may write with some ease and finish while in school, and the copy before them, but as soon as the rule and plummet, the school-desk and the round copy-plate is taken away, they have lost the art, and now find that they are unable to write a straight line or a legible one.

It is to be lamented that so much time is wasted in learning what they never do learn, or what, at best, they feel ashamed or unable to make any use of; or, with others, what is so soon forgotten. There is, generally speaking, a sufficient quantity of time appropriated to writing, sufficient care (though fruitless) taken to provide materials, (and a great quantity of them are used,) to make all of the scholars good writers. There is some fault on the part of the teacher, or parent, or among the pupils themselves; and we will (from personal observation) describe the process of learning to write in our district schools. The causes of so much imperfection may thus be developed.

The child is (in most cases, for it is true that there are some exceptions to what I am about to say, I wish there were more) provided with a single sheet of foolscap paper, doubled into four leaves, a quill, and an inkstand, which probably has nothing in it but thick, muddy settlings, or dry, hard cotton, and thus duly equipped, sent to school. The thin small quantity of paper is laid upon the hard desk, made full of holes, ridges, and furrows by the former occupant's penknife.

The writing desk in many instances so high that the chin of the writer cannot, without a temporary elongation of body, be projected over the upper surface; this being done, however, and the feet left swinging six or eight inches from the floor, and half of the weight of the body hanging by the chin, the child with a horizontal view examines its copy of

straight marks. It then is directed to take the pen, which is immediately spoiled by being thrust into the dry or muddy inkstand, and begin to write.

The pen is so held, that the feathered end, instead of being pointed towards the shoulder, is pointed in the opposite direction, directly in front: the fingers doubled in and squeezing the pen like a vice, the thumb thrown out straight and stiff, the forefinger enclosing the pen near the second joint, and the inked end of the pen passing over the first joint of the second finger in a perpendicular line to that made by the finger. In this tiresome, uneasy, unsteady attitude of body, and the hand holding the pen with a twisted, cramping gripe, the child completes its first lesson in the art of writing.

After such a beginning, the more the child writes the more confirmed will it become in its bad habits. It cannot improve; it is only forming habits which must be wholly discarded, if the child ever learns any thing. But in this wretched manner the pupil is permitted to use the pen day after day, for two, or four, or six years.

The teacher shows the scholar, perhaps, how to hold the pen, by placing it in his own hand correctly, but does not see that the pupil takes and *keeps* the pen in the same position *when writing*. If the pen should be held correctly for a moment, while the teacher is observing, the old habit will immediately change the position when the teacher has turned his back. Such practice and such instruction afford an explanation of so much waste of time and materials, of such slow improvement, and of so much bad penmanship.

Another pupil, who commences writing at a more advanced age, finds the desk too low, and from being obliged to bend somewhat, soon lies down upon the paper. I have seldom entered a district school during the writing hour, without finding the scho-

ars who were using the pen, resting their heads and shoulders on the desk, looking horizontally at their work, and the writing-book thrown half round, making its lines parallel with the axis of the eye. In this sleepy, hidden position, it is impossible to examine and criticise what we are doing; and yet, teachers from carelessness, or from having their attention directed to some other part of the school during the writing season, almost universally allow it.

Teachers seldom prepare their pens previous to their being called for, and they are consequently employed in mending them while they should be directing the scholars who are writing. They do not always specify and describe the frequently occurring faults in such a manner as to assist the child in avoiding them, and in improving the next time where he has previously failed. The criticisms are too general, too indefinite to profit the pupil, and he continues after this useless instruction to write in the same careless way that he did before.

Teachers likewise do not preserve the writing-books which have been filled, and hence they are not able to compare the one just finished with others written a few months before. If they should do this, the pupil might often be convinced of that which the teacher is unable to make him believe,—viz. that he makes no improvement. Teachers frequently set copies that are very improper for the particular attainments or habits of the pupil: not discriminating or knowing what is required.

To write with ease and facility that which may be easily read, is not only a desirable accomplishment, but in this land of free and distant interchange of thought, absolutely necessary. And as an irregular blind hand is not only a disgrace to the writer, but a consumption of much valuable time to the reader, I shall give some directions which may pos-

sibly improve the present system of teaching penmanship.

The child should commence writing at an early age, as soon as it has mastered its easy spelling lessons. Young children are fond of making marks, and with proper attention will learn to form letters as ready, if not readier, than they will when older. At this age, too, the teacher finds a difficulty in confining their restless minds to the book but for a short time, and writing comes in as a variety, and an amusement to them.

If children commence writing when young, they always become fond of it ; but those who are not permitted to begin till they are ten or twelve years of age, very frequently show a dislike to the pen, and become disgusted with the shapeless, uncouth letters their want of practice compels them to make. Their pride looks with scorn upon their inferior performance, and they throw aside the quill with contempt, probably never to make another attempt. I would say, by all means, let children commence writing while quite young.

In their first exercises they should use the slate and pencil. I recommend this after having observed the benefit of using the slate and pencil in more than one hundred different schools. In the public schools of the city of New York, I have witnessed as elegant specimens of penmanship as I ever met with in any select school, or even writing school ; and in all of these public schools the pupils are required to use the slate and pencil for a considerable time.

On the slates, the pupils should form letters and unite them into words. The letters should be large, and much care taken to give them their proper proportion. The teacher should also see that the pencil (which must be four or five inches long) is held in the same position in which the scholars will afterward be required to hold the pen. Let the pupil



continue to use the slate till he can form all the letters with ease, and give them their due proportion, and be able to unite the letters with uniformity into words.

If this method should be adopted in our district schools, I am confident it will be found a great improvement on the present practice, which is to give the beginner pen, ink, and paper at first. It likewise saves a great expense; the slate and pencil not costing an hundredth part as much as the pen and paper. And I think (and teachers who have used the slate agree with me) that the scholars improve faster while writing on slates, than they do while writing on paper.

When the pupil commences writing on paper, he should have a book made of at least four sheets doubled once, and well sewed and covered. At first, ruled paper should be used. The book should have the lines written out full, and kept free from blots; and each pupil should have an inkstand filled with clear, free ink.

This article in our district schools is apt to be extremely poor. The parents buy a paper of ink-powder, and put it into a jug with the prescribed quantity of rain-water and vinegar. For a time it is good; but after a while it is so far poured out as to appear thick. The practice, then, is to fill up the jug again with vinegar and water. The ink is now thin and pale, and not fit for use. The child carries it to school, but does not like it; and takes the liberty of running to one of its neighbours to borrow its penfuls, as they may be required while continuing to write. The rejected inkstand is placed one side, and used at the evening meetings, religious or otherwise, for candlesticks.

The inkstands containing good ink are frequently employed in this candlestick service, and thus all of the ink in the school-house is spoiled; yet the

children continue to use it, and blot their paper, and make many fruitless attempts to form the letters. If the inkstands should be so fortunate as not to receive this greasy treatment, they are, by the carelessness of the children, left unstopped, the ink permitted to evaporate and dry up, the loss of which is always the wreck of pens from their frequent dives after that which is not to be found.

The inkstand is then filled up with water, and the diluted stuff is used, because the owner never thinks (or perhaps is not able) to get that which is better. Sometimes the ink is thick, and does not run freely in the pen. This the young penman overlooks, or puts up with in the best way he can, though never able to make a fine mark or a smooth line. I say then, again, that the article of ink is not sufficiently attended to (either by teacher, pupil, or parent) in our district schools.

The pupil being provided with a pen, writing-book, and an inkstand filled with free, black ink, may take his seat at the writing-desk. The desk should be about as high as the elbow of the writer when the arm hangs down by the side, and the surface upon which the book is laid should be but very little, if any, inclined. Most of our district school-houses have badly constructed writing-desks.

They are injured, and stand unsteady, or cut full of holes, ridges, and furrows, or incline almost to a perpendicular, making it scarcely possible to keep the book on them, or too narrow, merely admitting the paper, and not any part of the arm. They should be altered, and made firm, wide, and almost parallel with the floor, and of several heights to suit the several sizes of the writers.

The pupil, at a desk of the proper height, should sit in a healthy, easy attitude; that is, but a very little bent over; his left foot a little in advance of his right; his left arm resting on the table, its hand

steadying the paper, and the body resting considerable weight upon it, and the left side of the body somewhat nearer the desk than the right. The right arm should be left free, either to be thrown out or drawn in towards the breast; it should receive no weight of the body, but be permitted to move in a rectilineal manner, unwearied and unrestrained.

The whole arm should frequently move, but the forearm will be in constant motion, permitting the hand and wrist to advance across the paper as fast as the words are finished. The pen should not be taken from the paper while writing a word, even the longest one. The fingers making the vertical, or up and down strokes, and the movement of the forearm the side, or what may be called the advance marks.- The pen should be held with the feather end pointing directly at the shoulder; it should be raised straight enough to pass up between the second and third joint of the forefinger; the thumb a little bent out, and the end opposite the first joint of the forefinger, and the pen resting under the nail of the second finger, the end of which should be three quarters of an inch from the paper.

Sitting in the position above described, and having this hold of the pen, the pupil may begin to write. The teacher should keep a close eye upon the writer, lest he change the position of the body or the pen.

This position is easy and natural, but former bad habits may make it a little unpleasant at first. The paper should lie square before the writer.

The teacher, having his pens (or pens for the younger scholars, for the older ones should prepare their own) in readiness beforehand, should have a stated time for writing, when all should be engaged in it at the same time. His constant attention during this exercise should be directed to the position in which his pupils sit, to the manner in which

they hold their pens, and to the imperfections of their writing.

When a disproportionate letter is made, the child should see it as such—when some letters are too far from each other, or crowded into too small a space, the pupil should be told of it, and made to perceive it—when the letters do not come down to, or reach below the line, and are not uniform, the writer should have his attention directed to this irregularity, and perceive the deformity it causes. Constant watchfulness is necessary on the part of the teacher; *for when the strokes of the pen are made correctly, and with care, every succeeding mark will be an improvement; but when they are made wrong, every repeated effort strengthens a bad habit, and renders the pupil more and more unqualified for becoming a good writer afterwards.*

As I have before said, the larger pupils should make their own pens. To do this, each one should be provided with a good knife, and be instructed by the teacher. One reason of so many poor writers, is that scholars in the district schools seldom learn to make their pens, and consequently are unable to furnish themselves when one is required in after-life. They are obliged to have some one, and they make the best they can, but it is, indeed, a poor thing.

This poor pen, added to what they have forgotten of their writing, or perhaps what they never knew, makes a miserable scrawl—their straight mark would have been quite as honourable; yet they have spent much time in learning to write. It is but of little use to learn to write, if we do not learn to make our pens. Let all teachers, then, who attempt to teach the one, also teach the other.

Young lads, who labour night and morning, and attend school during the session hours, should be careful not to over-heat or over-exercise their hands;

if they do, the swelling and trembling will prevent them from holding a steady hand when writing. Many commit this imprudence in their exercises. They should also keep their hands as pliable as possible.

They should read writing more frequently than they do; much may be learned from examining the beautiful penmanship of others. This exercise, too, would enable them to read writing with more facility. They should practise writing without having their paper ruled. They will have to write without lines, and they should begin at school. They should, also, write without the copy-plate before them. Many are able to write well with this, but without it they can do nothing. Break away from it in school, and it will be easier to do so when out.

## SECTION XIV.

### THE BEST METHOD OF TEACHING GEOGRAPHY.

GEOGRAPHY, till within the last twelve or fourteen years, was not taught in the majority of the district schools in the United States. At the present time, geography is taught in nearly every school;—with what success those know best who have patiently examined the children and youth now in the schools, and those who have recently gone out from them. I must say, after visiting many parts of the New England states and the state of New York, for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the condition of the schools and the intelligence of the people, that I discovered far less geo-

graphical knowledge among the children and the adults than I could have reasonably expected.

I knew that this study was made a prominent one, and that it was attractive, and admirably adapted to younger scholars. I therefore supposed that I should find many considerably advanced in the study of geography. I was painfully disappointed. I perceived that nearly all of the children had studied or were studying geography, but that very few had any thing to communicate on this subject in an intelligible manner. I sought for the reasons of this deficiency, and am convinced that I have discovered some of the causes which prevent the scholars from obtaining this delightful and useful knowledge. I will mention some of those hinderances which I perceived wherever I went.

\* But we come to the question, what is the *nature* of the education of the humbler classes which is extending in England, and has been so long established in Scotland? Is it of a kind to impart useful practical knowledge for resource in life—does it communicate to the pupil any light upon the important subject of his own nature and place in creation,—on the conditions of his physical welfare, and his intellectual and moral happiness;—does it, above all, make an attempt to regulate his passions, and train and exercise his moral feelings, to prevent his prejudices, suspicions, envying, self-conceit, vanity, impracticability, destructiveness, cruelty, and sensuality? Alas! No. It teaches him to READ, WRITE, and CIPHER, and leaves him to pick up all the rest as he may! It forges an instructive example of the sedative effect of established habits of thinking, that our ancestors and ourselves have so contentedly held THIS to be education, or the shadow of it, for any rank of society! Reading, writing, and ciphering are mere instruments; when attained, as they rarely or never are, after all, by the working class to a reasonable perfection, they *leave* the pupil exactly in the situation where he would find himself, were we to put tools into his hands, the use of which, however, he must learn as he may. We know well that he will be much more prone to misapply his tools, and to cut himself with them, than to use them aright. So it is with his reading; for really any writing and accounting of this class, even the most respectable of them, scarcely

And first, scholars do not easily perceive, and in many instances never, the true figure and motions of the earth, from its representation on the plane surface of maps; in other words, there is a want of globes, or substitutes for them. From the description of the earth in the geography, the child is told that the earth is spherical, but from the representation of it on the map, it appears a plane. That which is addressed to the eye is much more impressive and lasting than that which is made known by words. To the child, the earth appears a plane, and the map represents it as such. No means are taken to correct this wrong impression. It is true that the book says, and the teacher likewise, that the earth is round like a ball; and the pupil learns this, but he never *knows* it. Children, who have studied geography without a globe for years, have frequently been heard to say, when accidentally meeting with one, "Why, you don't mean that the earth is round like that, and turns over so?"—"Certainly; have you never learned that?"—"Yes, but we never *knew* it before." By the help of the globe, too, another error obtained from the map is corrected. The

deserves the name, and may be here put out of the account. Reading consists in the recognition of printed characters arranged into syllables and words. With this most abstract accomplishment may coexist unregulated propensities, selfish passions, sensual appetites, filthy and intemperate habits, profound intellectual darkness and moral debasement, all adhering to a man as closely after as before he could read; and, be it marked, these qualities will give their bias to his future voluntary reading, and assuredly degrade and vitiate its character; it will tend to strengthen his prejudices, deepen his superstitions, flatter his passions, and excite his animal appetites. Well is all this known to the agitator, the quack, and the corruptor. They know that the manual-labourer can read; but they know, as well, that he is incapable of thinking, or detecting their impositions, if they only flatter his passions. No just views of life have ever been given him, no practical knowledge of his actual position in the social system.—*Simpson.*

pupil perceives that but one-half of the earth can be seen at the same time; and by the help of a candle-at night, or in a dark room, the motion of the globe shows in a moment the true cause of day and night. Of all this the child remains ignorant with no other assistance than the map.

Now in the country not one school out of a thousand is furnished with a globe; nor is there a teacher among as great a number who has ingenuity or inclination sufficient to supply a substitute. The consequence is, that after all the study, the pupils are ignorant of these two facts which lie at the foundation of this department of knowledge.

Secondly, pupils with young and weak minds, limited knowledge, and ignorant of the vocabulary of geographical terms, are required to look round, and through the whole solar system, and over every part of the habitable or uninhabitable earth. The whole of creation, as far as man's vision or imagination ever went, is brought at the same time before the unexpanded infant mind. The present system of teaching geography requires the child to grasp this "huge globe" with all its myriads of animate and inanimate existences, and the innumerable bodies in the heavens with all their splendour and sublimity.

These are all presented at once. The mind is confused, lost; and by directing the eye towards objects far beyond our vision, we remain ignorant of the things around us, and never behold those in the distance. This evil arises from the books now in use in most of our schools. This necessary stretch of mind soon fatigues the pupil, and the multiplicity of objects prevents any one from appearing clear and distinct.

Thirdly, *scholars learn the definitions of the names of places, but do not form any idea of their situation and appearance.* For example,—“A bay



is a portion of water extending up into the land," is repeated by the pupil; but not in one instance out of five hundred is there any idea of the position of this body of water. Scholars commit their lessons in geography in the same manner they do their lesson in the catechism or their tables. They are never told that *this language describes objects and places*.

The study is a business of merely remembering words, when it should be that of *conceiving distant objects and places*. The child does not (as geography is now taught) make a transfer of the mind to the things described, but directs his whole energies in fixing the *words of the book* in the memory. Thus the study of geography is little more than reciting from memory a number of words and sentences in the order of the book, having no meaning to them whatever.

Fourthly, the representations of places and objects on the map, by marks, lines, and spaces, do not cause the child to conceive their true position, appearance, and location. The language of the map has no more resemblance (or if any, not enough to be of any assistance to the pupil) to the things it represents than the language of the book. What similarity is there between a shade on the map and a mountain? What is there in the former that can give the mind any idea of the shape and magnitude of the latter?

Again, what proportion in the spaces between places on the map and the spaces between places they represent? An inch in one place, and it may be one hundred or one thousand miles in the other. Maps, then, give no idea of the contiguity or remoteness of places to the young pupil. They may to a more mature, experienced mind; one that can form some idea of the proportion between the one and the other; but the scholar does not, cannot measure by this artificial relation. The teacher,

then, must assist the learner where language and maps necessarily fail ; but the maps and the language of the book, to the *teacher* represent and describe objects and places so well, that *he* can form a correct conception of them.

He supposes the child can do the same ; not thinking that it is a new language to the young beginner, and one that has no resemblance to the things described or represented ; or if the resemblance of the map does offer a little help, it is not enough to transport the mind of the pupil to the place or object in question, and give it any true conception. He therefore does not come down and aid the pupil where other helps end, and *his scholars learn geography without making any application of it to the earth!!*

Fifthly, there is too much said of dress, and fashions, and manners, and people ; the pupils are led to think of *persons*, and not of *places*. Geography should be studied for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the surface of the earth. It is, in fact, a description of this part of our planet. Its mountains, rivers, lakes, islands, oceans, and continents should be particularly attended to. The smaller and the greater artificial divisions, and the varied products, and the broad characteristics in animals and men in the different climates of the earth, should be made known by the study of geography.

But instead of these noble, heart-stirring subjects, which fill the mind with all that is grand and beautiful, varied and harmonious, the frivolities of fashions, the oddities of manners and customs, and the petty differences of nations, lead away the mind, and direct the attention to ~~that~~ which is of little comparative value, and soon lost from the memory. Geography, too, often becomes the biography of the human race, or takes the place of history, and relates the doings of men and nations. But the object of geo-

graphy is *space*, not time—the actual appearance of things *as they now are*.

By not perceiving the legitimate subjects and objects of geography, a multiplicity of things is placed before the mind, and prevent it from obtaining that degree of knowledge of any one place or subject which would make it interesting. In this case little can be said of each object, and the attention is so soon diverted that there is nothing fixed in the memory. The result is, that all the time and labour has been lost—worse than lost—spent in forming bad habits.

These are some of the difficulties and errors which I have met with among scholars pursuing the study of geography in our district schools. I admit that these evils are serious; yet I believe that a remedy may be had and applied to each of them. If improved books and maps, in connexion with a globe, and the assistance of a well-qualified teacher, should be introduced into the schools, the difficulties, which now make the study of little value, would happily disappear.

These changes can be made if parents feel the importance of educating their children. A suitable globe may be purchased for one dollar. This would be sufficient for the whole school, and would last, with proper care, at least two years. Thus a district may, for fifty cents a year, furnish their school with that which is indispensably necessary to the study of geography, and for the want of which so many difficulties and errors have been encountered to discourage and deceive the scholars in this simple, delightful study.

Books, which are not mere changes, but *real improvements*, may be had for the same price that is paid for those now in use in many of the schools; and qualified teachers, even if the wages are increased fourfold, are always the cheapest. There is nothing

necessarily preventive of the profitable study of geography in our common schools.

I will describe the method of teaching geography which is now generally approved of, and adopted by our most able and experienced teachers. Children five or six years old may commence this study with advantage. At this age they have learned the names of some of the objects which are included in geography; and though it be but a very small portion, yet they have seen a part of the surface of the earth. On this small part, and with the few natural objects their limited range has made them acquainted with, they should commence this comprehensive study. The rivulet or river that flows by the side or near their dwelling,—the mountain or the vale that may be seen from the window, or by a short walk or ride,—the boundaries of a field or farm, or their native town, which may be traced in person by a little travelling, may be viewed and described by the child, and these made to furnish its first lessons.

Having seen the flowing stream of water which his book calls a river, and the high mass of earth or rocks which is called a mountain, and the landmarks or fences which divide fields and farms, and from these conceiving the invisible lines which divide towns, counties, and states, he is prepared to form a correct idea of those objects and places which he will see represented on his map, and read descriptions of in the book, but which he has never visited. By commencing the study in this way, he has a visible definition of that new vocabulary of words and terms which he will meet in his geography.

When the pupil is familiar with the position and distances of a few natural objects, and can describe their appearance, he should be required to draw a map, and represent them by marks on his slate or blackboard. Of course, these will be rude sketches at first; but let there be suitable instruction from

the teacher, and repeated trials, till a pretty correct outline is formed.

In the first place, let the pupil draw a map of his room; representing its outlines, its benches and chairs, the stove and fire-place, the instructor's desk, &c. When there is some likeness in this sketch, let the map be enlarged, and take in the school-house, the play-grounds, the fields, and the more prominent objects in the immediate vicinity. Let such lines and marks be used to represent objects and places, now under the eye of the pupil, as are used on the map to represent similar places and objects which the pupil has never seen.

After there has been sufficient instruction and practice on this enlarged sketch to give it some likeness to the original, let a map be drawn which embraces the neighbouring river, creek, mountain, and adjacent farms. Let lines representing the roads, the boundaries of fields, and the streams of water, be delineated with proportion, and in the right place; and let marks for the natural and artificial lines and objects have their right shape and position.

A mere outline, including some of the most conspicuous objects, is all that should be required at this stage of the study. The pupil now knows the use of a map, and has taken the primary steps in learning to execute one which shall represent any part of the earth. With a little assistance from a pleasant teacher, this may be made a most delightful exercise for young pupils.

The most pleasing and correct method of studying geography, or, what is the same thing, the surface of the earth, would be to visit in person every place and object upon the globe. As this is more than one could do, even by spending his whole life in travelling, and as the greater number who wish to pursue this study have the privilege of travelling over but a very small part of this earth, some other

means must be taken to obtain information of places which they will never see.

The only means, except travelling, are the close study of those books which have been written by learned travellers, or people residing in the different parts of the world, and which contain a description of the objects, beings, and surface of the earth. The best book of this class is the geography, accompanied by a map, the latter having such a representation of the earth that you may cast your eye over the figure of its great surface at once.

By a close attention to this geography and map, you can, it may almost be said, visit every spot on the earth which would be worth your notice. They are the stages and ships of the mind, which, leaving the body at home, carry the soul around and over the whole earth. You should take a passage: and if, in passing along, some remarkable object or place is pointed out, examine it well, that you may be able to describe it to others, whose minds have stayed at home as well as their bodies.

A map, now, of the native state should be drawn, and all the information had concerning it which the pupil can obtain from the geography. The towns and counties should be shown on the map, and some of the most remarkable natural and artificial objects. A map of the United States may be drawn in outline, and the scholar permitted to get some general knowledge of each state. These outlines may be sketched on larger slates, or, what is better, on a blackboard; the scholar having a map before him for his guide. I know of no intellectual exercise more beneficial to the pupil than that of drawing maps. It develops faculties which make a well-proportioned mind.

The memory, to bring back to the attention whatever we may have learned concerning the place the pencil is delineating—conception, to bring vividly

before the mind that which the map represents—the imagination, in combining the individual elements of nature—abstraction, in separating various objects and facts from each other—comparison, in painting a likeness on the map—reason, in discerning the connexions of objects, and the relations of the parts to the whole—taste, in the close examination of nature, that we may give a true likeness, and imagination, by sending out the mind to the most distant part of the earth, are all in constant exercise, making that just proportion and beautiful symmetry so desirable in every mind.

Each state should now be taken up separately by the scholar, and made familiar to his mind, till the study of all the states in the Union has been thorough and minute. When this is done, the teacher should make the scholars acquainted with the globe, if he has one, and if not he can use some round substance as a substitute. The figure and motions of the earth, with its natural and artificial divisions, are what the scholars require to know. They now see the cause of day and night; the great quantity of water on the earth; the two continents; the position of islands and lakes, and the situation of the United States in the Western Continent.

After several lectures from the teacher on the globe, the scholars should direct their attention to Canada and Mexico, and then to South America. Then the oceans and seas should be studied; their situation, comparative size, their motions, inhabitants, and use, made known to the inquiring mind. There should now be daily reference to the globe. The use of the lines of latitude and longitude, and the equator should be seen, and their assistance received in learning the distances and positions of places. The agreement between the map and the globe should be seen.

The teacher should be careful that the scholars

learn the direction of places from the map. From a neglect here, scholars who are considered proficient in geography, do not know whether England is north, east, west, or south from them. They should take such views on the globe, that they will know at once the direction or point of compass of any place on the earth. If the teacher will direct the attention of the class to this particular point, they will learn the relative situation of countries in a short time.

This is necessary to be known on many accounts. News are daily coming from every quarter; and when a place is mentioned, the position and direction should be instantly conceived. I have often seen scholars, who had been "through the geography," and yet did not know whether Maine was east or south; Virginia, south or west. This ignorance of direction is great, and it should have the especial attention of the teacher.

The distances of places, likewise, should be taught; the length and breadth of the state; the number of miles to the most noted places, and the distances between them should be familiar to the pupil. This is seldom the case; but it is useful and important knowledge. The boundaries of the states should be so familiar to the mind that the position of each one would occur immediately. A map of all the countries in Europe should be drawn, and the geography of each attentively studied, as the scholar may have time. Asia should come next, followed by Africa.

The particular attainments and age of the pupil must direct the discriminating teacher. No directions but those which are very general can be given. I would, however, earnestly recommend the inductive method which I have described. I am satisfied, that from the constitution of the mind, and



the nature of the study, it is the best. It is likewise adopted by our most experienced teachers; and I hope will soon be received wherever geography is taught.

## SECTION XV.

### THE BEST METHOD OF TEACHING ARITHMETIC.

From this science very little is obtained in our district schools, which is of any *practical use*. There is much compulsive, uncertain, and laborious study of arithmetic; but it is often in vain, from the manner in which it is taught. Those who have received nothing more than a common school education, obtain their practical knowledge of the science of numbers, not from their instructions or study in school, but from their own invention, and the rewards of experience.

There is in this country but a small quantity of arithmetic *in use* which came from the schools; necessity has taught the people what they ought to have learned at school when young, and when they were wasting so much time and money to no purpose. After making such observations as justify these assertions, and reflecting on the misapplication of so much time and effort, it is natural to inquire why this is so.

Are the books in use filled with unintelligible rules and impracticable examples? Do the teachers omit the practical application of the principles they teach? or do the scholars but half know what they have the credit of having learned? To each of these inquiries we may reply, to a great extent, in the affirmative. Many of the books now in use,

are blind and difficult to the scholars, and present the art of calculating by numbers in an unnatural, discouraging form.

The magnitude of the examples is so great that the child forms no correct idea of the numbers which constitute them. The reasoning from them, therefore, the child cannot comprehend. These examples, likewise, are abstract numbers. The child's mind is not prepared for perceiving abstract numbers and quantities with sufficient clearness and distinctness, to be able to connect them with practical examples, the only use any one can make of them which is of any value. The pupil's mind is perplexed and wearied with these large, unmeaning examples, which he considers altogether useless, and without any practical connexion whatever.

This is the first idea which is obtained from the arithmetic; and it generally goes along with them until they relinquish the unpleasant study. In most cases the figures are new to the child, and the quantities they represent, he can form no conception of; and a darker, more disagreeable study, the pupil hopes he never will have to undertake. Such is the commencement of the study of arithmetic. What the child dislikes at first, it seldom becomes fond of afterwards.

The first step being but imperfectly understood, the pupil is not fitted to take the second, and consequently, from being unable to help himself, requires the aid of the teacher. The teacher's explanations do not assist him, he is not prepared for them on this point—he does not understand the first step. The instructor supposes the pupil stupid, and the pupil thinks that he has attempted what is too difficult for him to comprehend. The third step is tried, but with less success, for in the science of numbers the after steps always require a knowledge of those which have gone before. In this manner

the scholar is forced a short distance into the arithmetic without knowing where he is, or what he is doing. The whole is a mystery, for in reality nothing has been learned.

The teacher require the scholar to commit the rules to memory, but never gives or demands a single reason for one of them. The pupil has not understood the examples—knows nothing about the facts upon which the rules are founded; and of course does not understand the rule, or see any direction or application in it. The teacher is peremptory for the memoriter recitation of the rule, and the scholar, after many accusations of his memory, and much protracted labour, is able (from the mere association of words, for he has not, during the hundred readings, got an idea) to repeat the rule without the book.

I have frequently met with some of the larger scholars who could promptly and accurately repeat every rule in the arithmetic, and yet they were not able to apply in practical life the most simple one, nor did they know one reason for any of them. How can they expect that such knowledge will be of any use? The great thing aimed at with teachers, seems to be *the ready recitation of the rule from memory, rather than the ready application of it to practical purposes.*

The tables, also, which ought to be committed before any progress is attempted, are either entirely overlooked, or less than half learned. The child is at work in the rule of multiplication, and does not know how many four multiplied by four make. Every time he multiplies he is sent to the multiplication table. This constant reference to that which he ought to know, interrupts his operations—he forgets the last step he took, and on examination the sum is wrong. In this manner he goes through the rule; still ignorant of the table.

He is, perhaps, ciphering in the compound rules, but does not know one of the tables of weights and measures! If any thing is done, there must be a constant turning back to the tables: *and there they should keep till they know them.* In the everyday transactions of business, these tables are required, but the pupils have never learned them, and thus are compelled to spend considerable time in hunting up a book that will inform them, or to make confession of their ignorance, and beg the knowledge from some one of the company—a shameful resort, indeed, for one who has had the opportunity of acquiring this necessary knowledge.

If the tables had been thoroughly learned at first, there would not have been this delay and embarrassment in working the sum in the school-room, or out of it in transacting the necessary business of life. But few scholars graduate at our district schools, who are able to recite the one-twentieth part of the tables. They are consequently unprepared for the most common transactions in practical life.

There is another defect found in nearly every school. The scholar has been labouring on a sum for some time, but cannot get it right. He carries it to the teacher, who takes the slate to himself and does the sum, the scholar at the same time looking at something else. The slate is returned with the sum done out, and the boy takes his seat. Does he now examine the work of the teacher, and see what was done to obtain the answer? Not at all.

Why? Did the teacher explain it to him? No. Has he any more knowledge of the sum now than he had before he went to the instructor? No. What does he do then? Why, he rubs out the sum and proceeds to the next. He has got *over it*, he has gained so much towards the end of the book; whether he can do the sum or not is of no consequence to him or trouble to the teacher. Such, it

is frequently seen, is the indifference of the teacher, and the superficiality of the scholar.

In the books on the subject of arithmetic now in general use, the scholar meets with but few practical examples. Their nature, and the form in which they are presented, differ widely from the examples which occur in the affairs of life. The youth, not seeing that the general, leading principles are the same in both cases, knows not how to apply the knowledge of the school-room as an assistant in his calculations when abroad.

I have known lads who have "gone through" the arithmetic, requested, while standing by the counter, to ascertain the amount of several articles of goods, which their mother or their sister had just been purchasing, but they would hesitate, mention several sums, and after all take the merchant's account with not even practical knowledge sufficient to examine it.

Why is this so? Two reasons. The books are deficient in practical exercises, and the teacher does not direct the scholar's mind from the abstract principles and examples of the book to their practical use. If the teacher had frequently proposed such sums as occurred in the store, the scholar would know how to go to work, his experience would give him facility and correctness, and the instruction of the teacher would be present for his assistance.

*Teachers do not bring enough of the sales and purchases, the measurements and calculations of the world into the school-room.* When a scholar has learned a general principle, or an abstract proposition, the teacher should see whether or not the pupil can make any use of it,—whether he can show its practical bearing, and apply it to the every-day business going on in the world. But this is seldom done, and the scholar is little benefited.

If a promiscuous sum is given to a lad taught in this manner, he does not examine the nature of the

sum, and find out the relations of its parts, and the first steps necessary to be taken, but immediately tries to find an analogy between it, and some one which he has been told how to work. The sum does not suggest its appropriate rule, and he knows not what one to apply. After doubtfully, and probably incorrectly, trying one rule, and then another, and then a third, he gives up in despair; the sum is laid aside, or worked out by the teacher, *never to be looked at by the scholar.*

These are some of the errors in the present systems of teaching arithmetic. The reasons why scholars obtain so little that is of any practical use from this branch of knowledge in our district schools, can now, we think, be clearly perceived. I will now give some directions, that some of these errors may be avoided at least, and that the science of arithmetic may be made pleasant and useful.\*

When a child begins to use its senses, the first thing, probably, which takes its attention, is the figure or form of material objects. The next thing noticed is number, or the existence of many separate individual objects. Thus the child learns to count a few of the first numbers very early, generally before it knows the names of the letters. Having the idea of number, and being able to count a short distance, it is constantly making small calculations. These operations are performed on their playthings, and other visible, tangible objects which draw their attention.

They add one quantity or number to another: they take one quantity from another, and they divide a quantity into several parts. The method which

\* Since I wrote this work, I have examined "The Common School Arithmetic," by Professor Davies, and I am happy to say that to this work I can give my unqualified approbation. I earnestly desire to see this arithmetic in every common-school in our country.

children take to perform these mental operations is not always the most expeditious; and hence the necessity of giving them instructions in what they are delightfully and naturally engaged in. It will not do to give them rules at first. The judicious parent or instructor will encourage these natural operations, performed in whatever manner nature may direct.

After they are able to view what they have done, and reflect upon these calculations, some defects should be pointed out, and some improvements suggested. Such encouragement and direction will enable children, at an early age, to form a great variety of combinations of numbers. At this age the mind may be assisted by sensible objects: Abstract quantities or numbers, the child cannot distinctly comprehend; a visible, tangible sign should be used to represent them.

As soon as the child is familiar with the examples which come under the four simple rules, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, he may commit a brief comprehensive rule for each. These rules being founded on the very operations he has already made and understands, have a meaning in them, and they will give him more accuracy and expedition. Beans, or nuts, or any small objects which children may handle, can be used to represent the abstract numbers.

For example, the child has five chestnuts, and we wish to make it perform the operation of taking two from five, and then to tell the remainder. We take away two of the chestnuts, and ask it how many it now has. The reply is three. Then two from five, how many remain? The child answers readily, three. An answer it would not have given if there had not been a visible illustration of the quantity taken away and the quantity left. By increasing the number of the chestnuts, and then dividing them among several individuals, involved

questions in addition and division may be answered.

These visible, tangible signs may be made to represent almost any proportion or relation in the combination of numbers. The proportion of the rule of three may be seen at a glance. Let three chestnuts be placed by the side of six others, and four more by the side of eight others. The child then sees that three are to six as four are to eight; or, in the words in the abstract rule, the first term is to the second as the third is to the fourth; or, let us take three quantities: three chestnuts are placed by the side of six others, and these six by the side of twelve:

Now, the child sees that three are to six as six are to twelve. By this means, that proportion, at the glance of the eye, is made known, which is seldom perceived by working every example under the rule. Visible, tangible signs in the hands of an ingenious, *judicious* teacher, may greatly simplify and facilitate the acquisition of knowledge. They may be used with advantage in geometry and the still higher branches of mathematics.

Care, though, should be taken that these sensible signs are not carried too far. There is danger when too much dependence is placed upon them, of making the mind averse to deep, abstract thought; thus preventing the discipline it should always acquire in this study. They should not prevent the mind from thinking—*they should make it think clearly.*

After the pupil can perform with ease a few examples in each of these simple rules, the multiplication table should be learned. This is always a great task to scholars. It is with difficulty they keep their minds fixed upon the numbers, and they generally forget one line while studying the next. This discourages them, and they now try to learn the whole at once. For days, and weeks, and months,



and frequently years they read it over and over, but yet they are unable to fix it in the memory.

I have known scholars imbued with a thorough hatred to the whole science of numbers, from the difficulty they found in committing the multiplication table. Now all of this difficulty is occasioned by not mastering one part at once; by running carelessly over the whole with the eyes or the organs of speech, and the mind directed to something else, or wandering without any object in view. If the pupil would have patience to confine himself to one part, and commit that thoroughly to-day; and tomorrow another small part; and the next day a little more, he would in a week's time so fix the whole table in his memory, that it would always be ready for his use.

The multiplication table is easily learned, if scholars will study right; and this should be the business of the teacher to oversee. The whims of children on this subject have too much latitude in our district schools. The memory has not been exercised, and the effort is new and almost always difficult to be made; but the teacher should remember that disciplining the mind is as much his duty to his scholars as imparting information. The habit should now be formed of continued, fixed concentration of mind to one subject. When the scholars are committing the tables, the teacher has a fine opportunity of commencing this discipline; and he is culpable if he does not improve it.

When the multiplication table is familiar to the memory, the pupil may be permitted to work the examples under the simple rules, as far as the compound rules. Here the pupil must stop and learn the tables of weights and measures. A knowledge of these will not only be necessary to understand and perform the examples under the compound rules, but absolutely necessary in the business of

after-life. To know how many gills make a pint; how many inches a foot, and feet a yard, and furlongs a mile, is required of every one who lives in the society of men. These tables are generally learned so superficially, that the scholar has forgotten them by the time he has gone through the next rule in advance.

When the pupils can say them forwards, or backwards, or any other way chance may present them, let examples which come under the tables be given to the scholars. Working these will recall the tables, and give the pupils an opportunity of seeing their use and application. The teacher should give the class practical sums, not found in the book, requiring a knowledge of these weights and measures. After the compound rules and reduction are mastered, the pupils may advance to those more complicated.

It should always be the aim of the teacher, when questions are asked by the pupil, to ask such other questions as will enable the pupil to answer his own. Knowledge which we discover ourselves is more acceptable and useful than that which others give us. The teacher should explain the rules, show their application, and then throw the scholar upon their direction. He should strive to make the pupil think for himself, and believe that the book is all the assistance he wants. If the pupil is not assisted by the rule, a second explanation must take place. No part should be passed over not understood.

Some of the rules of the arithmetic have a more direct application with the labouring classes of society than others. These should receive a particular attention. The simple rules, compound rules, rule of three direct, and interest, are among this number. A knowledge of them will make men ready and accurate. Under these, the teacher should multiply practical examples, making them familiar in every shape.

And, lastly, teachers should aim at rapidity of operation in all of the arithmetical exercises. It is a great advantage to do a sum *quickly*, as well as accurately. Great rapidity in numerical calculations may be attained by exercising ourselves in thinking quickly. This habit, likewise, will accustom the mind to be active on other subjects. Thus the two legitimate objects of the science will be gained, useful knowledge and mental discipline.

## SECTION XVI.

### THE BEST METHOD OF TEACHING GRAMMAR.

GRAMMAR may be termed the science of language; and language, in the most extensive sense, is the instrument or means of communicating ideas and affections of the mind and body from one animal to another. The language of brutes is inarticulate sounds, but the language of man is articulate sounds and written signs or characters. These characters are combined into words, and when brought before the eye (from the common consent of men and common usage) represent to us the ideas of others. When these elementary characters or letters are united into words and inscribed on paper, or any substance which receives their form, they are called a written language.

Grammar, then, as a science, treats of the natural connexion between these words, and makes known the principles which are common to all languages. These principles, upon which the grammar of a language is founded, are not arbitrary or variable, but fixed and universal. They are formed from the

natural, permanent phenomena of the language in the same way that the principles of Natural Philosophy are formed from the phenomena of nature. The author of a grammar collects the facts and phenomena of a language, and from them forms the principles which make the science of the language.

The grammarian sees in every language several classes of words of the same nature; to each class he gives a name. For instance, words which represent things, or whatever we may form a notion of, he calls nouns. Another class he calls verbs, another adjectives; and finally he perceives in the English language and names, nine classes of words. Their natural distinctions are always seen, and make what is called the nine parts of speech.

Again, these classes of words have various relations to each other, and are sometimes modified by what they represent. These relations and modifications give rise to what grammarians call number, case, mood, tense, &c. Every individual has the same opportunity of observing these facts and phenomena in a language, that the individual had who wrote the grammar. The grammarian examined the language as it is, and has given you what he discovered. He has written out a science which is so obvious to all, and at the same time so simple, that all may learn it; and they may not only learn it, but they may make a practical use of it; for the whole object of the science is to enable every person to write and speak with ease, force, and correctness.

To do this is very desirable to all. Every person must use language, and when it is used well, there is a force and beauty given to the ideas which they otherwise would never have. Thus grammar becomes an important study to all. Without this study men will use either too many or too few words in expressing their ideas—they will use those which do not mean what they intend to say, or

those which express more or not as much as they mean. They will put words in the wrong place, making their ideas obscure or unintelligible ; and thus they will always employ that powerful instrument, by which they act upon the minds of others, in an awkward, disagreeable, and powerless manner.

I am aware that grammar has been considered a difficult subject, especially to younger scholars. But I apprehend that most of the difficulties have arisen rather from the manner it has been taught, than from the nature of the science. He who can bring two things together and see whether they are alike or unlike, may learn the grammar of his language, and be able to make use of what he has learned, whenever there is an occasion for speaking or writing.

I know how dry and useless scholars in our common schools have found this study. The custom is for all to study grammar, yet, as far as I have examined, I have never met with many scholars, educated in the district school, who were benefited in the least. Nearly every pupil could repeat the grammar from beginning to end with great fluency. It was manifest that in all their study on the grammar they had exercised no other faculty than the memory. They had been taught to consider their grammar as something that was to be committed, and nothing more.

Years had been spent in doing this, and yet the scholar was just as unable to distinguish a part of speech, to apply a rule, or construct a sentence, as if he had spent the whole of that time in committing to memory words and sentences to which he could connect no meaning whatever. The scholars had spent months, and more frequently years, in parsing, but had used the dictionary to find out what part of speech the word in question was, and then *guessed* its modification and government.

If they guessed what the teacher considered as

right, they went on, and nothing further was said ; if the guessing was wrong, the teacher corrected them, and the only manifestation they had to give of understanding why they were wrong and the teacher right, was their ability to repeat the teacher's correction, and then pass on to guess out the next word. Consequently the time which scholars devote to the study of grammar in our common schools, is spent in *committing to memory and in parsing by guess*.

Now why does not committing the grammar to memory qualify the scholar for distinguishing parts of speech ; for seeing their relations to each other, and for perceiving their government ? Why does he not parse with some correctness, with some certainty of the truth of what he is saying ? Is the grammar which he has committed, good for nothing ? or has he not mental capacity sufficient to understand it ? or has he been taught to understand what he has been learning, and make a practical use of it ?

We believe the fault is suggested by the last question ; though the books are not faultless, for the best system we have seen may be improved either in its definitions or arrangement, or its adaptation to the youthful mind ; and we know, too, that some have commenced the study too young, or with minds not sufficiently cultivated ; but the main cause of scholars not deriving any benefit from studying grammar, is their not understanding the rules and definitions they have learned.

Scholars seldom know even the object of grammar. How can they know what application to make of it ? But few teachers know how to assist the pupil in the study of grammar. The most of them do not understand it themselves, and it cannot be expected that they will give what they do not possess. I know of nothing in which our district schools are so defective as they are in the art of

teaching grammar. An entire change is necessary in the system now adopted.

The study, instead of exercising only the memory by committing the words and sentences of the book, and the organs of speech by pronouncing after the teacher, should appeal to the judgment, and to what has already been learned, for assistance in making farther progress. We think the study of grammar, if rightly taught, is level with the capacities of scholars in our district schools at an early age. To get a practical knowledge of the science is not difficult; the disputed points in the philosophy of the language may be, but these do not belong to the learner. Scholars are continually violating the plain simple rules of their language, and the object of their attending to the grammar is to obtain that knowledge of the construction of the language which will enable them to avoid this inaccuracy, so offensive to good taste, and so disgraceful to its author.

That the study may become a pleasant and profitable employment to all who engage in it, I will describe a system which has been thoroughly tested, and is now adopted by eminent teachers. It has been my lot to study grammar in the same way it is now taught in the district schools, and I am confident that I learned nothing which was of any benefit to me. I know that it was always a dark, uncertain, disagreeable study, disliked by the pupils, and avoided as much as possible by the teacher. I have, likewise, personally observed the practice of the system that I am now about to recommend, and shall have the advantage of speaking from experience.

When a scholar opens his grammar, he meets (after a few preliminary remarks) with the names of nine parts of speech, or classes of words. These names or words are entirely new to him—he has never met with them before, and he of course has

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When a scholar opens his grammar, he meets (after a few preliminary remarks) with the names of nine parts of speech, or classes of words. These names or words are entirely new to him—he has never met with them before, and he of course has

but a mere conjecture of what they mean. By looking farther, he sees these technical terms defined. He reads or commits to memory the definition; but the definition has by no means given a full, distinct idea of the meaning of the term.

There are two reasons why the definitions have failed in doing that for which they were intended. The first is, the definitions in the grammars now in use are miserably deficient within themselves. They either include words which are unintelligible to the scholar, or are of so abstract a nature, or so complicated, that they are as blind and as unmeaning as the technical term itself. The great importance of giving correct definitions to this art has never been duly appreciated.

There are in these nine parts of speech, the noun, the article, the adjective, the pronoun, the verb, the adverb, the preposition, the conjunction, and interjection, proper and natural differences; and the best way of preparing the young mind to distinguish these differences, is to tell in a clear, direct manner what these terms are. Unless he has a true perception of the thing, and can tell what it is, he will not know how to distinguish it from that to which it may have some resemblance. These defective definitions cause great indistinctness in getting the meaning of these first elements which constitute the science.

The second reason is, scholars, from their previous habits of study, do not suppose they can understand what they read. They have never been required to do this: in learning to spell, they pronounced words without connecting with them any meaning; and they have learned to read or pronounce words in sentences without attaching any meaning; and they now in like manner pronounce the words which make the definitions of the grammatical terms, without even thinking they have a meaning which ought to be perceived and understood by them.

Now, that a scholar may commence right, he should have an accurate, distinct definition of each part of speech. If the book does not make the definition of the term clear and intelligible to the pupil, the teacher should do this by examples and illustration. The teacher should also see that the pupil thinks of what he is saying, and that he understands what the words mean. Let the instructor select a noun (and this should be done when the scholar first commences the study, not after he has committed, as the usual practice is, the whole grammar), and request the pupil to tell the part of speech.

This the pupil will generally do, if he *understands the meaning of the word that is selected, and the definition of a noun*. If he does not understand the meaning of both, he will only guess; there will be no certainty. And here can be seen the reason of so much *guessing* in the parsing exercises—ignorance of the sentiment they are parsing, and of the definitions of the parts of speech. Let the teacher point out a large number of words which are names of things, or names of notions in the mind, and ask the pupils their part of speech.

When they can readily distinguish a noun, let the teacher, to see if the scholars understand the definition of the term noun, mention some words which belong to other parts of speech, and thus ascertain whether they can distinguish the noun from other words by its definition. Then the teacher should require the pupils to point out nouns, and tell why they are so. When they are accurate and ready in this exercise, the instructor should teach them to distinguish between the singular and plural numbers. This, as there are but two numbers, they will soon do. They should be told distinctly what made a noun singular and what plural. Then let them name nouns of each number.

After this, let them learn the gender of nouns.

Let them know what gender means, and require them to mention nouns in the masculine gender, and then some of the feminine, and others of the neuter gender. On this they should practise till the gender of any noun is perceived instantly; and then they should know the distinction between proper and common nouns. After this the person of nouns should be attended to; that the one that speaks is first person; the one that is spoken to is second person; and the person or thing spoken of is third person. And lastly, in this first exercise with nouns, let their "case" be understood.

Let them know that case means condition, and that this condition alters according to the relations the word may have to others in the same sentence. Let these relations be seen, so that the case will always be known. Now the scholars should parse the noun in its states. Let the words, for example,— "Father's house" be given. Let them tell the part of speech of father's; whether a proper or common noun; what gender; what person; what number; and what case. Let them go through with the word house in the same way. This exercise on the noun should be continued for a considerable time. This is all interesting, and may be made intelligible to small scholars. By this means they will understand the terms, and learn to think and discriminate between the several conditions of words of the same part of speech.

At this point let the two articles be pointed out by the teacher, and the distinction between the two, and the nature and use of each, made plain to the pupil. Let their position before nouns be seen, and the general use of "an" instead of "a" before words beginning with a vowel.

After this, let the class of words called adjectives be given to the pupil for their next lesson. Let the teacher show the class the nature of adjectives; that

they include those words which are added or joined to nouns for some purpose, generally to express their quality. Let the scholars see that they have neither number, gender, or case; that the adjective never changes, except in its degrees of comparison; and that these degrees are three. Let a number of words from the class of adjectives be shown to the class; and the pupils required to tell why they are in this class of words.

Now the teacher should select the three parts of speech which the class has learned; say, "a wise man," and request the scholar to parse them. The scholars then say, that "a" is an indefinite article, and they tell the reason,—that "wise" is an adjective, because it describes the qualities of "man." Then the pupil should be taught the formation and nature of the positive, comparative, and superlative degrees. When he understands these, he should put those in the positive state into the other states, and name the comparative and positive states of those he finds in the superlative. He should be exercised for some time in learning the nature of adjectives, and in changing them through their degrees.

The class of words called "pronouns" should be attended to next. The scholars should know distinctly what a pronoun is,—the difference between the three kinds clearly perceived, and the appropriate use of this part of speech. The pupil now should point out the words that belong to the class of pronouns, and likewise tell which are relative, and which are personal, and which are adjective. After sufficient exercise in this, the scholar may go to the "verbs."

As this is a complicated part of speech, the teacher should proceed with order, distinctness, and thoroughness. Care should be taken to give the pupil a correct definition of the name, "verb." As nouns

are names of things, so verbs are the names of actions.

Let a number of words belonging to the class of verbs be shown to the pupils; let their use and nature be seen, and all the properties in which they differ from other parts of speech. The pupil should not, at present, attend to the distinctions between the active, passive, and neuter verbs, or the peculiarities of the irregular verbs. It is sufficient now to fix in the pupil's mind the simple definition of a verb, free from any of its modifications. The scholars may then be taught that verbs have person, number, mood, and tense. The last two words are new to them, and should be defined intelligibly.

When they know the use of mood and tense by a variety of examples from the teacher, they should attend to the different moods and several tenses. There is so much technical phraseology in this part of all grammars, and the differences in the forms of the verb so nice and abstract, that the teacher will find it necessary to be "*copious in his examples, and ingenious in his illustrations.*" The pupil should conjugate one of the verbs through the active voice. In doing this, the appropriate form of the moods and tenses should be remembered.

When the child is familiar with the active voice, let it attend to the passive, carefully comparing it with the active, and noting all the distinctions. After the conjugation of this, let the neuter verb be studied in the same way. Then the auxiliary verb "to have," and the irregular verbs may be learned. A little order and patience on the part of the student, and familiar illustration on the part of the teacher, will soon obtain the mastery of the verb.

When this is done, let the nature and use of the "adverb" be the subject of the lesson. The words it qualifies, the several classes, &c., the pupil should distinctly see. Then the "prepositions," with their

usual position, and their use in connecting words with one another by showing their relations. Then the "conjunction," with the distinction between the copulative and disjunctive, and the use of each. And, lastly, the "interjection," serving to express the emotions of the speaker or writer.

The pupil is now supposed to understand the terms that he is obliged to use in the study of grammar, and also to be acquainted with the nine sorts of speech, and their most usual modifications. Much of the language of the grammar was entirely new to the scholar, and he may now consider himself as through the driest and most difficult part.

At this stage of the study, the pupils should be detained some time in acquiring readiness and accuracy in naming the different classes of words, and in putting them through their respective and various modifications. When this can be done without hesitating or missing, the pupil should learn and apply the rules of syntax. For this exercise he is now prepared; he can now see the reason of having rules. The facts and phenomena upon which the rules are founded he has been attending to; he knows what gave rise to them,—how they were made, and their true use.

By this method he has learned grammar in the same way that he acquired knowledge when Nature was his teacher; the particulars before the generals, the facts before the principles. To fill the mind with general rules, without knowing a reason for one of them,—to compel the pupil to give them without seeing their application, to load the memory with undefined terms,—to expect the pupil to discriminate between things which must and will appear to him to be the same, and to repeat words for years without annexing to them one idea, is the present mode of teaching grammar. The system that I have now recommended, in the hands of a competent

teacher, *will secure interest to this science, and ensure practical knowledge from its study.*

When scholars see the properties, relations, and government of words, they should be exercised on false etymology; sentences of this nature being given to them for correction. The teacher should always make them give their reasons for the alteration. Then the scholars should examine sentences which present false syntax. The instructor should always watch for faulty sentences in the conversations or compositions of his pupils. When he detects any, their authors should be required to correct them by their knowledge of grammar. The scholar should make constant use of this knowledge in correcting the bad grammar he will be sure to hear in every society; and he himself should, after this, "write and speak with propriety."

## SECTION XVII.

### HISTORY SHOULD BE MADE A STUDY IN DISTRICT SCHOOLS.

THE American youth have sadly neglected the history of their country. I know of nothing so easily acquired, so highly important, so useful to all, and at the same time so thrilling in interest, concerning which the American people manifest so much ignorance. Many of those who have had the higher privileges of education are familiar with the histories of the nations of antiquity; they are well acquainted with the histories of the more distinguished nations of the present day; and yet almost entirely ignorant of the history of their own people and country.



Histories which are purchased and read are not those of our forefathers; but of foreign, remote nations, or those who are now gone from the earth. We turn our attention to the doings and sayings of other nations, as if there was nothing instructing or interesting in our origin, growth, and greatness. How seldom do we meet with men, even among the better informed, who are able to rehearse their country's deeds, or to call the names of those who toiled and bled for their country's liberty! This is not the tribute we owe to those who bled for our blessings.

The youth of this free and independent government should prize the American history as the great register of civil rights and noble deeds. They should embalm it upon their memory, and be ready, at all times, to repeat the story of their liberties. No lessons are more useful than those we learn from history. They are counsels from the experience of nations. The light that history sheds upon time now gone, illumines the time that is yet to come. It is the great telescope of the future.

Then, who is so well prepared to foresee his country's destiny, or labour for his country's good, as that man who has been taught by his country's history? What man can value his nation's liberty and prosperity, except he has read their cost? Yet, how few of those who are now our country's hope, and soon will be her men and rulers, who know any thing of her history! There is scarcely a primary school where it is taught, and but few of the higher schools make it an important study! This should not be so. The history of the United States should be taught at home, and at school, and in conversation by the way-side. Every member of society, every citizen of this commonwealth, should be intimately acquainted with every bright example or important event in our history. These should be the themes of our highest eloquence, and to them we should

ever appeal. What is there of more interest to the American youth than the first settlement of this great continent?

Where did these bold spirits come from, and what was their after history? Who did they find here, and what has been the friendship, or enmity, between the native and the European? What was the character of the first settlers of this New World, and under what government did they live for some time? Is the government the same now, and if not, when was the change, and what were the causes? What were the consequences of refusing to obey the government of others, and declaring ourselves an independent people?

Who were the great men foremost in this noble work? How many did we number when we fought for our liberty? Who suffered and died for freedom? How long were we in achieving our independence? Who assisted us? How much was the nation in debt at that time? Who were the great leaders in the struggle for liberty? How have they been honoured? What distinguished men have lived since? What has been our increase and prosperity? What changes are we making on this continent? How are we regarded by other nations, and what are our prospects?

Who is there, that enjoys the bounties of this land and the blessings of its liberty, that does not want to answer these questions, and many others like them? What youth is willing to step into manhood, ignorant of this wise and deeply interesting volume, which our history presents? The history of the United States should be taught in every district school; and it should always be studied with a map. Historical information will give interest to places, and lend a charm to geography. A knowledge of history will tell us how others have lived, and enable us to compare ourselves with the past,

and prepare ourselves for the future. The civil history of the United States should be made a study, likewise, in all our elementary schools, as well as in academies and colleges. This is a very important part of education. The constitution of the United States should be familiar to every American youth. This document should be studied, with some approved; judicious commentary. I know of no treatise on the constitution so well adapted to schools, as the "*Outlines of the constitutional Jurisprudence of the United States; designed as a Text-book for Lecturers, as a Class-book for Academies and common Schools, and as a Manual for popular use. By William Alexander Duer, LL.D. President of Columbia College, in the City of New York.*"

## SECTION XVIII.

### COMPOSITION SHOULD BE PRACTISED IN DISTRICT SCHOOLS.\*

COMPOSITION is but little attended to in our common schools. Scholars are seldom required to combine and arrange their ideas; and they rarely put their knowledge of any subject into the form of a written language. This is one of the great defects in the present system of teaching. There are several reasons for this. To compose well is not a necessary qualification in the teacher, under the present system of inspection. In ninety-nine cases out of

\* The paragraphs having quotation marks, are from Wheatley's Rhetoric,—an admirable work.

a hundred, the inspectors never inquire or ascertain whether or not the candidate can think naturally and connectedly on any one subject, and clothe his thoughts with language which is appropriate and grammatical: and the consequence is, that but few teachers compose with ease or correctness.

What they perform with difficulty and imperfectly, they will not feel disposed (and if they did, would be unable) to teach others. Hence the art of composing has but very little importance in the estimation of the teacher, and is entirely disregarded by the scholar. Parents are not in the habit of composing, and take no pains to have the art taught their children. They are pleased when it is discovered that their child writes a good letter: but the means of ensuring this excellence they wholly disregard.

They seem to forget that the ability of expressing one's thoughts with readiness and perspicuity, is acquired only by long practice and good instruction. They do not see that an apprenticeship in this is as necessary as in any thing else; thus, they do not consider that which would give their children this desirable qualification.

"The scholars suppose composition a mystery; something that does not belong to *them*, but to *those* who have great learning and a wonderful genius." They look upon it as a thing impossible that they should learn to write; and what they regard so far beyond their reach, they never make any efforts to obtain. I know of nothing for which scholars usually have such an abhorrence, and which they make such efforts to shun, as composition. They struggle with the vacant, undisciplined mind till they become exhausted, and then give up in despair.

"They feel that their labour has been fruitless and wearisome, and are heartily glad to escape, wishing never to resume the task again.

"One cause of the difficulty is an improper choice

of their subject. They generally select one which they know nothing of; one that would puzzle a skilful writer to handle intelligibly; and one that is abstract and indefinite, and altogether above their comprehension. By trying to grasp subjects of this kind, the mind perceives nothing distinctly; the thoughts become vague and uncertain, and the little that may be written, after much toil, is unconnected and dissatisfactory.

“Another difficulty is, they think that they must write something that no one else has written, and that their very language must be in a new idiom, or else it cannot be considered as their own. Thus, by selecting subjects with which they are unacquainted, and which their minds are not able to investigate, and by supposing that something perfectly original and new must be produced, they put obstacles in the way which neither patience nor perseverance can overcome; and, after repeated efforts, they consider composition to be something that some gifted few only have executed by a sort of magical and supernatural power.

“In other arts, it is usual to begin, for the sake of practice, with the easiest; but the reverse takes place in learning the art of composing. The scholar has a harder task assigned him, and one in which he is less likely to succeed than he will meet with in the actual business of life. The scholars choose such subjects that they know not what to say or how to say it.

“They select subjects about which they have scarcely any information, and no interest,—concerning which they know little, and care still less. And hence it commonly happens, that an exercise, composed with diligent care by a young pupil, will be very greatly inferior to a *real* letter written by him to his friends on subjects that interest him. On real occasions of after-life, for which his school exercises

were designed to prepare him, he will find that he writes both better and with more facility than on the *artificial* occasion, as it may be called, of composing a declamation. And he will discover that he has been attempting to learn the easier by practising the harder.

“But, what is worse, it will often happen that such exercises will have formed a habit of stringing together empty commonplaces and vapid declamations; of multiplying words, and spreading out the matter thin; of composing in a stiff, artificial, and frigid manner; and that this habit will more or less cling through life to one who has been thus trained, and will infect all his future compositions.

“The only preventive of these evils is a most scrupulous care in the selection of *such subjects* for exercises as are likely to be *interesting* to the pupil, and on which he has, or may (with pleasure, and without much toil) acquire sufficient information. Such subjects will of course vary, according to the learner’s age and intellectual advancement; but they had better be rather below than much above him. Compositions on such subjects, and in a free, natural, and simple style, may be thought puerile by those who practise the opposite mode of teaching; but you will see a picture of the writer himself; boyish, indeed, it may be, in looks and stature, in dress and demeanour, but lively, unfettered, and natural, giving a fair promise for manhood; and, in short, what a boy should be. In education, we should consider what is becoming and appropriate in each period of life.

“First, subjects for composition should be drawn from the studies the pupil is engaged in; relating, for instance, to the characters or incidents of any history he may be reading. Secondly, subjects drawn from any conversation he may have listened to (*with interest*) from his seniors; or, thirdly, re-

lating to the amusements, familiar occurrences, and every-day transactions which are likely to have formed the topics of conversation among his familiar friends. These subjects may be intermingled with as great a variety as possible.

“And the teacher should frequently recall to his own mind these two considerations; first, that since the benefit proposed does not consist in the intrinsic value of the composition, but in the *exercise* of the pupil's mind, it matters not how insignificant the subject may be, if it will but interest him, and hereby afford him such exercise. And, secondly, that the younger and more backward each scholar is, the more unfit will he be for *abstract* speculations, and the less remote must be the subject proposed, from those *individual* objects and occurrences which always form the first beginning of the furniture of the youthful mind.”

Instruction and exercise in the art of composition ought to have a prominent place in all our primary schools. Collecting and arranging their ideas would teach the scholars *to think*. It would teach them to think patiently and correctly; and it would confine the action of the mind to one subject. Thus, the exercise would correct the greatest of all evils in our systems of education, viz. the want of clear, connected thought.

It would do more; it would show the scholar how much he knew of the subject which he has been studying. Scholars are generally very much deceived respecting the real amount of their knowledge. They think they know much more than they actually do. After they have read a book through, or finished a study, a few general ideas or prominent outlines may be remembered, and from these the scholar supposes he has mastered the whole. But when he is required to communicate his knowledge, or to put it into a composition, he

finds that he has in reality but very little to say ; and he says this little in a very awkward, unintelligible manner.

When the book is laid aside, he finds, that he is unable *to go alone* ; and, as respects intelligence for practical purposes, he is no more improved than he was before he read the book. But if scholars were in the habit of composing, they *would think when they read* ; and, by writing their thoughts, they would know how much they have learned by reading. Practice in composition would give scholars the power of expressing themselves with ease and elegance.

We seldom find one, even among the most learned, who possesses this faculty ; and the reason is, they have not been in the habit of arranging their knowledge, and clothing it with expressive language. Let all, then, who would learn to think, and who wish to ascertain how much they really know, and to have the power of imparting knowledge to others, pay close attention to the exercises in composition.

To write a composition is not so difficult a thing as scholars imagine. He who can talk, can write ; and if he can talk correctly, he can write correctly. Composition is nothing more than conversation put on paper.

And yet, I have seen lads who would continue a narrative, or a debating speech for a half hour or more, and still not be able in the same time to put three sentences upon paper. If they had been taught what composition is, and had practised it, writing would be as easy as speaking. There is no mystery in composition ; there is nothing in it to torture the mind ; it is as easy, and as simple as conversation ; and all may learn to write with facility and accuracy. Let there be the right kind of practice, and any one will soon possess the ability.

The teacher should require every scholar, who



can read and write, to produce a composition every week. He should see that the proper subjects were selected, and that the scholars had suitable assistance. The compositions may be handed to the teacher, who should examine and correct them. He should so point out the defects, that the scholars would perceive and avoid them. After the compositions have been corrected, the teacher may allot a certain hour, or half day in a week, for reading them publicly to the school. He need not mention the writer's name, nor publicly the corrections he has made. This exercise, if judiciously conducted, may be made pleasing to the teacher, and of the greatest benefit to the scholar.

## SECTION XIX.

SOME OF THE FIRST AND GREAT TRUTHS OF NATURAL HISTORY SHOULD BE TAUGHT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

THIS useful and intensely interesting subject is almost entirely neglected in our common schools. Not one pupil in a thousand ever learns a single lesson, in either the mineral, vegetable, or animal kingdoms. The young farmer learns nothing of the varieties of soil, its nature and composition, and its peculiar preparation for different grains,—he obtains no knowledge of the nature and growth of vegetables, or the properties and influence of the “life-giving air.” The most important information for his business, the school does not give him.

The little knowledge that he acquires of his business, he is obliged to get by ignorant experience and

blind observation. The mechanic does not study the nature, pliability, and uses of the minerals and metals; nor does he learn the beauty, strength, and durability of the various timbers. The labourer in his experiments has no science to assist him; he is preparing nature to administer to his necessities, without knowing her rules of action! He knows nothing, for his school has given him no opportunity to know of his own physical nature, nor of the properties of the natural world around him.

He cannot, therefore, conform his life and conduct to the relations which exist between matter and his physical nature. He has no means of foreseeing the infringement of the organic laws. In his school he has never learned the most common and simple truths in physiology or anatomy. The structure and uses, the layers, the mucous coat, &c. of the skin, the common school student learns nothing of.

He is not told that the skin is the seat of perspiration—the regulator of animal heat, and the seat of absorption. He does not see the sympathy between the skin and the other organs of life, nor the causes of suppressed perspiration, (an action which brings on the most of our disorders,) nor the connexion between the skin and the nervous system. Being ignorant of this vital organ, he abuses and neglects it. He gives no attention to suitable clothing, to ventilation, nor to washing and bathing; for he has no information on these subjects.

He has learned nothing of the structure and action of the muscles, nor of the degree and kind of exercise which they require to give them strength, elasticity, and health. He has no acquaintance whatever with anatomy, and knows not that the bones are composed of animal and earthy matter, and that they are essential to motion, and to the security of the vital organs: he does not study the growth and decay of the bones, nor perceive the advantages of

their vitality and insensibility, and their adaptation to contained parts.

Of the nature and use of respiration, the structure of the lungs, the necessity of pure air, and the healthy condition of the digestive organs, the common school pupils never hear or read a word. They grow up, and live entirely ignorant of the nervous system, knowing nothing of its functions and education; nothing of these great inlets of knowledge, and instruments of pleasure and pain.

They are not taught even the causes of good or bad health, nor the physical consequences of immoral conduct!! Not one truth of this science which shows that man is "fearfully and wonderfully made," is taught in our district schools!! This need not be so, for there are no truths more simple or pleasing, than some of the most important facts of physiology. There should be a text-book on this subject for our common schools.

Although there are "sermons in stones," they are not "delivered" to the common school student. Neither his teacher nor his books speak even of the first principles of geology or mineralogy. The earth, our common mother—the womb and the grave of every living object—the great companion and benefactor of the farmer, has, in the country, scarcely a teacher to make known her nature, her elements, and her energies. That which the agriculturist has to labour with, and from which he obtains his "blessings and his bread," forms no part of the farmer's education.

Does not the neglect of even one department of natural history, show a great deficiency in our common school education? But the vegetable kingdom is as little attended to. Plants, flowers, and trees, find no teacher in district schools. The places they enliven with their freshness, sweeten with their fragrance, and cool with their shade, never speak of

their bounty or their beauty, their wisdom or their Author. Many of those who spend their lives in nursing flowers and cultivating plants, know nothing of their structure or their organs, nor even their artificial or natural classification! What additional interest would the farmer feel amidst the freedom and the freshness of his labour, if he could be enlightened with even a faint ray from the science of botany! But it would be a lonely and wandering ray that would enter the room of the district school.

There should be a text-book adapted to our elementary schools. It may be called, "Botany for beginners." Its lessons should be simple, and its arrangement scientific; but not dry and technical. It should treat of "practical botany," as far as possible. It should speak of the principles of organization which is possessed by all plants, and which separates them from all inorganic matter—their analogy to animals, having sap for blood, woody fibres for bone, pith for brain and nerve, and bark instead of skin; that their leaves imbibe air as we breathe it—that they require food as we do, though their leaves and roots are their mouths—that the digestive powers of plants are as perfect as they are in some of the lower animals—that they imbibe and expire an aerial fluid as we do, and that they emit oxygen gas while we absorb it.

It should show that earth is not so essential to vegetable growth as moisture, and that light is necessary to make plants flower and bear fruit. It should point out the nutriment of plants, and show that it is various combinations of inorganic matter, such as earths, salts, water, or the gases,—that they are, like animals, injured by too great a supply of food; for this reason, wheat will not grow in any of the Polynesian islands, and runs too much to straw in many parts of the United States.

It should enlarge on vegetable improvability, showing that animals have this power far less than vegetables. It should show the wonderful transformations which have arisen from this improving principle. The rose is the product of cultivation; the original plant being the common wild brier. Our plums are the descendants of the sloe; the peach and the nectarines of the common almond tree; and filberts are the improvements of the wild hazel. Apples are the cultivated successors of the small sour crab, which the swine will scarcely eat. The original pear is a pithy, hard, crude fruit. Our different grains were once in a state very like grass, and our domestic vegetables are the artificial products of human skill and vegetable improvability.

From this improving and undecaying principle in plants, the earth can never have a superabundant population. But nature is so bountiful in her spontaneous productions, that no art has been so little studied as agriculture, and none so little improved. We as yet know nothing of the productiveness of vegetable nature; increasing the number of plants, only increases their productive power. Nature is improving and expanding before us every day, and her productive laws are indefinite.

This the farmer and the horticulturist should know, and they should obtain such an elementary knowledge of the vegetable kingdom, while attending to their education, that they may have the assistance of science in their important and delightful labours. The vegetable kingdom, in its varied flowers, foliage and stems, its graceful and delicate expansions, its playful branches and gentle movements, presents one of the most interesting volumes that the scholar can ever read.

This volume, so full of wisdom, elegance, and religion, should be open in our district schools. It should be read by all the scholars, and expounded

by every teacher. The study of the vegetable kingdom has an intellectual and a religious influence, and we have a right to infer, that this was the design of the Creator when he willed them into existence. They are pledges of his affection to the human race—signs of love to prove he thinks of man. Does it not become us then, by studying them, to prove that we think of our Creator?

Zoology, and ornithology likewise, should be studied in every elementary school; and when he turns to the animal kingdom, what a vast volume lies before the student, of tastes, and customs, and manners, and propensities, and passions, and consummate instincts!! Here is a combination of allurements that draw us, and fascinate us with a magical captivity. There is in the realm of vegetables, every thing that can delight the eye or gratify the taste; it is all simple, splendid, variegated, exquisite! But in animals we see the faculties of the human mind; senses, memory, imagination, the principle of imitation, curiosity, cunning, ingenuity, respect for superiors, are all discoverable in the brute creation. What a volume for our study!!

Yet it is not made a text-book, or a reading book in the district school. The very animals which the farmer raises, and the mechanic employs, are never made a study in the whole course of education. The former should know the different species, and the great varieties of each species—he should understand their nature, their growth, their congenial habits, and their favourite and wholesome nourishment. If he has this knowledge, he will be making improvements not only for his own good, but for the good of the whole human race. The farmer and the mechanic in the country have peculiar advantages for studying natural history; for they are daily seeing and handling the objects of their lessons.

To facilitate the study of this delightful science,

there should be a cabinet of minerals, an herbarium &c. in every district. This cabinet may be placed in the school-house, and under the superintendence of the schoolmaster. After a small collection of minerals and plants is made, the teacher should give appropriate lectures on them, two or three times a week, to all the members of the school. This may be done in addition to the daily recitations of the natural history class. Knowledge of this kind is the most valuable that man can acquire. It enriches his life with conveniences, enlarges his views, and lays a foundation for rational piety.

The Great Creator has made every object on the theatre of the universe, and stamped upon every thing a divine impress. Whether we look upon a planet or a plant, we shall see that they are the works of God, and that they have a title to our highest admiration ; “for in wisdom has he made them all.” “The earth is full of his riches, and the heavens declare his glory.” All that we see is God—all nature is his awful temple, and all the sciences are porticoes which open into it.

## SECTION XX.

### CONVENTION OF TEACHERS.

It is my earnest desire that conferences be formed among the schoolmasters of each canton.—*Cousin's Report.*

How shall teachers become better prepared for their profession? How can they be continually improving their minds and their systems of instruction? And how shall every teacher receive the light which the more experienced are constantly

throwing upon the subject of instruction? We know of no means so common to all, and so favourable, as county conventions of teachers.\* Heretofore there has been but very little communication between teachers. The improvements which one has made, have not been made known to others; the incompetency of teachers, and the bad systems of instruction, have been concealed; and united efforts of teachers have not been made to elevate and honour their profession.

Other classes of men have had their conventions. Men of science, ministers, and statesmen, to ensure enlightened and united operations, appoint their conventions to redress wrongs, correct errors, and make known the improvements and able suggestions that may be discovered or proposed by any one of the parts. The wisdom and experience of these conventions not only enlighten the people and sit in judgment upon their errors, but produce throughout the whole country similarity of feeling, and harmony of effort.

For the peace of the church, the advancement of science, and the prosperity of the country, such conventions are absolutely necessary. But are not conventions of teachers equally necessary for the improvement of our schools? Does not the difficult and responsible profession of teaching require all the light and knowledge that can be obtained on this subject? Does not the incompetency of teachers invite all the aid that can be furnished from those who are better qualified by experience, and from

\* It will therefore be more expedient to form small societies or meetings of schoolmasters, for three or four weeks, in order that they may go over, methodically and in concert, some special portion of what they have to teach, as, for instance, arithmetic, singing, the German language or religion.

This plan will have the advantage of always bringing together men of equal attainments on one single point, which will thus be studied more fundamentally.—*Cousin.*



other literary men? Certainly, every one will say; such assistance is highly important; it would afford that necessary aid which teachers now have no means of obtaining.\*

Yet so great is the apathy of the people, that we seldom hear of a teachers' convention. And when their proceedings are made known we find that but few attended, and that but very little was done. The manner in which these conventions are announced and conducted, excites but little interest; and as yet, but a small number of teachers have been profited by them. But how shall teachers improve themselves if not by such conventions? Works on education have a very limited circulation.

Not one teacher out of a hundred reads any thing on the subject; nor will they read before the *living voice* excites their attention. There are but few seminaries for educating teachers, and rarely a lecture delivered on school-keeping. Teachers are seldom qualified when they enter into the profession, and they have neither the assistance of teachers in the vicinity, nor intelligence from abroad, either from books, or the speaking lecturer.

This should not be so. There are means which teachers may use to prepare themselves for their profession, and for improving themselves while engaged in its duties. And I know of none so advantageous to teachers, and that is attended with so little expense and within the reach of all, as frequent

\* This excellent measure recalls to me another of the same kind, which, though it forms no part of the internal regulations of normal schools, has equally in view the improvement of the acting masters, I mean those conferences of the school-master of a circle or district, in which each communicates to his brethren his own methods and experience, and all are enlightened by the interchange of views and thoughts. These conferences are voluntary, it is true; but the government encourages them, counsels them, and often arranges them itself by means of the school-inspectors.—*Cousin's Report*.

town and county conventions. If these are generally announced and faithfully attended, they will not only be highly interesting to teachers, but of the greatest benefit to our schools.

Town conventions of teachers may be held every month, and county conventions should be called every three months. They should be attended, not only by teachers, but by all the friends of education. Each individual should go prepared to contribute to their interest and usefulness, and with a hearty desire to promote the general cause of education. Each county association should have a correspondence with similar associations throughout the United States. By this communication all the improvements or changes which have been made may be made known.

The light which has appeared in any one favoured spot may shine into every part of the Union. The books which are published, either to be used in school or for the improvement of schools, may be made known, together with the examination which others have given them. The periodical works on education may be mentioned and examined. Notice of literary conventions may be given, and delegates appointed to attend them. Papers from the state or parent society may be read, and reports from the county or auxiliary associations made out and sent to the parent society.

It should be the object of these conventions and communications with other associations to discover the origin of the defects in the present systems of instruction—to ascertain the actual condition of the schools throughout the United States—to inquire into the character and qualification of the teachers of these schools—to find out the number of children in the United States who are in school, and the number who have not, or do not use, the means of education—to ascertain the progress the scholars

make, and the amount of knowledge which they acquire in these schools.

To discover the interest which parents take in the education of their children, and the protection and assistance which literary men give to primary education—to convince the people of the necessity of general intelligence in a free government, and to make known the duties which every one owes to the free institutions of his country. Such are some of the high and important objects of teachers' conventions. But these are of a general nature, and belong to the welfare of the whole country.

The *mutual improvement* of teachers is one of the first objects of these conventions. To render this mutual instruction, each teacher, before the convention, should describe his system of instruction, and his form of government. Let each one state his experience in teaching the several branches of an elementary education, and that school discipline which he has found, after a fair trial, to be the best. From this interchange of views on the best method of teaching and governing, many valuable suggestions will be elicited, and many evils and defects disclosed.

In this way, teachers will compare themselves with each other, and each one may be profited by the wisdom and experience of the whole. During the interval of time between the conventions, the teachers and friends of education should collect what information they can from abroad on the subject of instruction, and make it known for the benefit of all at the meeting of the convention.

Individuals should be appointed to deliver lectures before these conventions; the object of the lectures being either to illustrate or simplify the branches which are taught in our common schools, or to make known the best methods of imparting instruction. Discussions, also, should be held on the best method

of teaching children their letters: and discussions likewise on the best method of teaching reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar.\*

Discussions on the government of children should be held, and on the best method of making scholars feel an interest in their studies, and also how a school may be made pleasant. In carrying forward such discussions, and in delivering lectures before the convention, each teacher should be willing to perform his part, and desirous of making all the transactions before the convention highly interesting and profitable to all who attend.

By such a free interchange of thoughts and sentiments on the business of their profession, teachers may render valuable assistance to each other, and create that harmony of feeling and good-will which is so necessary for their own happiness and the honour of their profession. From a want of this interchange of views and feelings, and the influence of such associations, teachers have not been proverbial in their friendship for each other, but rather the contrary. Frequent meetings would make them better understand and appreciate each other.

Teachers likewise, at these conventions, should propose means for improving the intellectual condition of those parts of the country which they represent. They may excite an interest in learned and benevolent men towards these primary schools. They may persuade parents to procure useful books and periodical works for their children, and to give

\* It is no less the object of these conferences, to furnish the masters with an opportunity of gaining new lights and of extending their own knowledge. Questions in grammar, in the German tongue, in arithmetic, &c. will therefore always form part of the business of the meeting; as likewise, the reading of works on education, and other books which are likely to furnish matter useful to schoolmasters; the practice of singing, and reciprocal communication of the experience of each.—*Cousin's Report.*

them a fair opportunity for the improvement of their minds. Teachers may make known the uncomfortable condition of school-houses, and the general want of co-operation on the part of parents.

If a statement of these evils should be made, the districts would feel it their interest and their pleasure to pay more attention to the education of their children, and their teachers' comforts and compensation. We believe that teachers, by frequent conventions of this nature, have not only the power of making themselves better qualified for their business, but of removing the great indifference which now prevails on the subject of education.

## SECTION XXI.

### THE LOCATION AND STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL-HOUSES.

MANY of our district school-houses are among the very worst specimens of architecture. The construction of these edifices has received but little attention or aid from the more intelligent part of the community, and has been left to the care of those who have known or thought of no other model but the old building, and who have studied their pecuniary interest more attentively than the education and comforts of their children. I know of nothing among us that brings so great a reproach upon our affluence and intelligence as the low, dark, filthy appearance of many of our district school-houses.

There is no part of the means of education that makes a stronger demand upon the learned and benevolent, and none which requires a more thorough reform, than the location, size, structure, and fix-

tures of the buildings in which nineteen citizens out of twenty receive their first impressions, their first character, and the principal part of their education.

Objects which are constantly before the eye, although they may be inanimate, have a wonderful influence upon the mind. This being acknowledged, the situation of a school-house becomes a matter of great importance. But I would ask the reader to think for a moment of the location of those he may have witnessed.

They are frequently standing on a bleak, barren, stony eminence, where the winds and storms have an unbroken, chilling sweep, and the hot rays of the summer's sun one constant burning glare, where there is neither grass nor leaf, but heated, drifting sand, or sharp and flinty rocks. Such is the burning, desolate, dreary situation of many. Others are placed on some marshy, refuse piece of land, where the stagnant collections of water, and the noxious vapours poison the atmosphere, and make the situation gloomy and sickly; and others again close by the road's side, where the passing of travellers and the rattling of carriages divert and distract the mind.

In addition to these gloomy, uncomfortable, unhealthy situations, and constant interruptions from travellers, there is frequently found close by the school-house a blacksmith's shop with its incessant pounding, and the cooper's shop with its constant "rub-a-dub," or the public inn, with all its noise and bustle; so that if there is not bedlam in the school-house, there is all around it. And how unfit the business and company of such places for children! How demoralizing the influence on the scholars, and how offensive and annoying to the teacher!

The structure of school-houses is frequently as injurious and unpleasant as the location. They are often low, and cramped, and miserably ventilated; the room sometimes is filled with smoke, and always

with impure air; the seats so high that the scholars are unable to touch their feet to the floor, but must sit bolt upright, without a back-piece, perched between the heavens and the earth; the writing-desk, in front, as high as the eyes of many of the occupants; the seats so arranged that the movement of one disturbs the whole seat, or in such a position, that the teacher finds it difficult to get near the pupils; and the windows so scarce, or so small, or so filled up with wooden panes or hats, that but little light can enter, making the whole appearance dismal and painful in the extreme.

O how entirely opposite to every thing that should accompany and assist the mental and physical development of children! In this torturing condition, and in this dismal receptacle, which seems to be regarded as a necessary evil, the children are to remain for weeks, and months, and years. Can it be thought strange that they should dislike their studies? Can it be thought strange that they should rejoice when they are no longer compelled to enter this abode? Who would not "hate instruction!"

I would by no means say that all school-houses are of this description; but I think that every reader has seen many that were attended with some of the inconveniences, if not all, that I have mentioned. I would earnestly request all to notice the construction and location of these houses, when they are travelling through any part of the United States. In the state of New York, and in the New England states, these buildings are superior to those in the other states, but my remarks are applicable even to many of the school-houses of New England and New York.

But as my desire is not so much to point out defects as to suggest remedies, and to make known well-tested improvements, I will make some remarks

upon the proper location, structure, size, fixtures, and appendages of school-houses.

And first, the *location*. This should be on a piece of firm ground, at some distance from the road, and where the air has a free circulation. The place should be quiet, and protected from the winds and the rays of the sun by a surrounding grove. The natural scenery around the house should be varied and beautiful; and this is highly important, as all natural objects as well as individuals have an influence in making us cheerful or otherwise, in proportion as they appear pleasing and agreeable.

When the parent selects a site for his own dwelling, he does not choose the most worthless corner of his farm, nor a marshy, gloomy spot, but a place that is dry, light, and airy, where the natural scenery is rich and beautiful, and where he will not be incommoded by others. Should he not be equally solicitous for the comfort, health, and happiness of his children, by selecting a pleasant situation where they are to be educated?

A child is educated by other teachers than books and schoolmasters. Every object that he sees, whether animate or inanimate, teaches him; every flower, and plant, and shrub, and tree,—"lessons of heavenly wisdom teach;" and every running brook, and singing bird, are teachers; the air, and the earth, and the ocean teach; and where they are the most eloquent, parents should place the infant mind.

There is a difference in nature's teachers, and parents may choose the wisest and the most winning for their children's tutors. Then, let a lovely, delightful spot be selected for the school-house; let every thing around it be comfortable and cheerful. Let the school be removed from the noise and sight of business, and from every thing that would endanger the body or divert the mind.

There are some districts which are not privileged



with such locations; and the parents in these must choose the best spot they have. But how often have I seen a school-house standing in the very worst place in the whole district, because that spot happened to be central, according to the surveyor's chain, when, within fifty or a hundred rods, a shady, quiet, retreat, a delightful place for a school might have been chosen.

The average number of children who are fit subjects for the school, in the districts of New York, is about sixty. To accommodate this number, the school-house should be one story and a half high, forty feet long, and thirty in breadth. This height will admit of a high ceiling, which is of great importance in a room that is filled. The walls should be overlayed with boards, as high as the heads of the scholars, and the remaining part of the wall and the ceiling kept pure and bright with whitewash.

The floor should be level, having an elevation opposite the door for the teacher. The stove should stand near the door, to let the current of air which rushes in drive that which is near the stove and heated to the distant parts of the room. There should be two entrance doors, an inner and an outer one. The outer one opening into an entry or hall, of sufficient size for the scholars to place their hats, cloaks, and bonnets. The inner door, opposite the outer one, and opening from the hall into the school-room.

There should be three windows in each side of the room, and two in the end opposite the door and hall. The lower part of the windows should be at least five feet from the floor; and the upper sash should be lowered when air is admitted, instead of raising the under one. Windows of this height from the floor, and of this construction, have many advantages. They prevent the scholars from looking out; and being farther from their reach, are less liable to injury. The scholars will not be so much exposed

to the air when they are *lowered*, and they will permit the impure air which rises towards the ceiling to escape. The windows should have blinds on the outside, and curtains on the inside.

The desks should be so constructed, that when one moves, he need not disturb the others; and so arranged that the teacher may see all the scholars in the face, and have easy access to any one of them. The benches should vary in height, so that they may suit scholars of different sizes. The height should always be such that the scholar may rest his feet upon the floor. The edge of the desk, next to the scholar, should be directly over the edge of the seat. The distance between the surface of the seat and the surface of the desk should vary at least twelve inches among the different desks of the school, that they may be appropriate for large and small scholars.

The upper surface of the desk should be nearly horizontal, and about three inches higher than the occupant's elbow when the arm is flexed. In many school-houses, the surface of the desk is so oblique, that the pupils find it difficult to keep their books and slates upon them. Others are so low that the scholars almost lie down upon them, and in this way remain in a very unhealthy posture. *The body should be kept erect, and the limbs as nearly as possible in a natural position.* If the desk is high, the arm and shoulder must be raised, and the wrist bent, and this will soon occasion pain, and distort the body. How often are the lungs diseased, and the digestive organs deranged, by too low desks? And, on the other hand, how many distorted and deformed bodies, from having the writing arm raised up too high? Teachers should be careful that every scholar has a suitable seat and desk.

School-houses are poorly ventilated. The breathing of each individual in the room destroys nearly

a gallon of air every minute; and the effluvia that is constantly escaping from the body passes into the air of the room. From these two causes, the air in the room soon loses its vital principle, and becomes loaded with disease. Breathing this polluted atmosphere produces the pale faces and meagre forms we so often see among scholars. It is this infected atmosphere that makes the teacher's employment so unhealthy.

It is the poisonous state of the air that occasions the drowsiness and stupor among the scholars. It is the impure air that produces languor, loss of appetite, and disease in the lungs. It is a wonder that scholars preserve either health or activity. How many have lost their health, and destroyed their constitution, by endeavouring to improve the mind, but neglected the body! Let teachers, then, see that their school-rooms are well ventilated, and that their scholars take proper exercise in the open air.

Attached to every school-house should be a playground for the scholars. This will keep them from the dangers of the highway, and from the cultivated fields in the vicinity. This ground should be free from every thing that might injure the scholars. Every school-house, likewise, should have an out-building, for preserving the wood from the weather. This building will seldom be filled, and will serve to protect the scholars from the storms, during the moments of recreation.

There should be a good spring of water, or a pump, near the school-house. This convenience is not sufficiently attended to. The scholars are obliged to disturb and injure the property of the nearest neighbour, and sometimes to go a great distance whenever they wish to drink. A watering place should be provided for the school at a proper distance, and kept in such a condition that the younger scholars may obtain drink without difficulty or danger.

## SECTION XXII.

THERE is scarcely a school-boy in the United States "three feet high," who has not been told, and repeatedly told, of the necessity of "*learning how*" to speak. Scholars are by no means to suppose that the Author of their being has given them the powers of utterance; these powers, they are told, which will enable them to speak to their fellow men, must be *acquired* from an instructor. The prevalence of these sentiments has brought before the public a great number of systems and teachers of elocution. The instructors in this art tell us where to find the emphatic words, where to suspend, raise, or lower the voice, and when and how to give the thought the proper action.

This encouragement, and the generally received notion, that every one must *learn* how to speak in some way or other, has introduced these artificial rules and instructions of rhetoric, not only into our professional seminaries, colleges, and academies, but also into our primary and higher schools. Our district and public schools have their weekly season for declamation; and every lad, big enough to say, "Though I am young," &c. comes forward, and, automaton-like, goes through with his oration, accompanying it with a certain number of changes of position, and elevations of the arm.

The practice of *learning to speak* has become so general and so popular, that the teachers of our elementary schools consider it a necessary part of

\* The paragraphs having quotation marks are from Wheatley's Rhetoric.

a republican education to make their scholars go through all the stages of debatè, declamation, and dialogue, enlivened occasionally with a little comedy or tragedy. "Now what must be the effect of all this artificial training? What must be its influence on the school-boy, when neither the sentiments he utters, nor the character he assumes are his own, or supposed to be so, or anywise connected with him; when neither the place, the occasion, nor the audience which are *actually present*, have any thing to do with the substance of what is said."

"Almost every one, even if they have not paid any critical attention to the various modulations of the human voice, has observed the different tones of voice which the same individual makes use of in conversation, from those which he uses while reading, or speaking in public. So wide is the difference of the tones employed on these two occasions, that it seems as if two systems (one for conversation, and one for reading and speaking) had been exercising the voice of every individual we meet with." And this, in fact, is the case. Nature directs our conversation, but art has taught us how to read and speak.

Says Sheridan, in his "Art of Reading," "I have often tried an experiment to show the great difference between these two modes of utterance, the natural and the artificial; which was, that when I found a person of vivacity delivering his sentiments with energy, and of course with all that variety of tones which nature furnishes, I have taken occasion to put something into his hands to read, as relative to the topic of conversation; and it was surprising to see what an immediate change there was in his delivery from the moment he began to read. *A different pitch of voice took place of his natural one, and a tedious uniformity of cadence succeeded to a spirited variety*; insomuch that a blind

man could hardly conceive the person who read to be the same who had just been speaking."

Does good reading or speaking require this difference? If so, they require something unnatural, for we see that men converse in their natural tones. But to read or speak in tones and manners which are unnatural, and therefore artificial, will never make good reading or speaking; but it will cause just such a delivery as almost every individual *by his instructions* is prepared to make,—stiff, measured, affected, powerless, and in the highest manner offensive. Such is the effect of not preserving the natural tones and manner while reading or speaking, and also of attending to artificial schemes of rhetoric.

"The advantage of a natural manner, that is, a manner one naturally falls into when he *is really speaking* in earnest, may be estimated from this consideration; that there are few who do not converse so as to give effect to what they are saying. Every one, when conversing earnestly, delivers his sentiments with much more clearness, force, and elegance than he would read the same sentiment if it was written down in a book.

"Our advice, then, would be, to follow the natural manner. The practical rule that we would recommend is, not only to omit any studied attention to the voice, but studiously to *withdraw* the thoughts from it, and to *dwell as intently as possible on the sense; trusting to nature to suggest spontaneously the proper emphasis and tones.*

"He who really understands what he is reading will be likely to read as if he understood it, and thus to make others understand it; and he who feels what he reads, and is absorbed with that feeling, will be likely to communicate the same impression to his hearers. But this cannot be the case if the speaker or reader is occupied with the thought

of what their opinion will be of his delivery, and how his voice ought to be regulated; if, in short, he is thinking of *himself*, and of course taking his attention from that which ought to occupy it exclusively.

“Some may suppose that the natural manner which we have recommended, amounts to the same thing as *taking no pains at all*; and after trying the experiment by reading or speaking carelessly instead of naturally, their ill success will probably lead them to censure the proposed method. But it is no easy task to fix the mind on the meaning, in the manner, and to the degree now proposed. When one is reading any thing that is familiar, his thoughts are apt to wander to *other* subjects, though perhaps such as are connected with that which he is reading; if, again, it be something new to him, he is apt (not indeed to wander to *another* subject) to get the start, as it were, of his readers, and to be thinking, while uttering each sentence, not of that, but of the sentence which comes next.

“And in both cases, if he is careful to avoid those faults, and is desirous of reading well, it is a matter of no small difficulty, and calls for a constant effort to prevent the mind from wandering in another direction, viz. into thoughts respecting his own voice—respecting the effect produced by each sound—the approbation he hopes from the hearers, &c. And this is the prevailing fault of those who are commonly said to take *great pains* in their reading; pains which will always be taken in vain, with a view to the *true object* to be aimed at, as long as the effort is thus applied in a wrong direction.

“With a view, indeed, to a very different object,—the approbation bestowed on the reading,—this artificial delivery will often be more successful than the natural. Pompous spouting, and many other

descriptions of unnatural tone and measured cadence, are frequently admired as excellent reading and speaking ; which admiration is itself a proof that it is not deserved : for when the delivery is *really good*, the hearers (except any one who may deliberately set himself to observe and criticise) never think about it, but are exclusively occupied with the sense it conveys, and the feelings it excites.

“He who reads in an artificial manner, makes a kind of running comment on all that is uttered, which says, ‘I do not mean, think, or feel all this; I only mean to recite it with propriety and decorum.’ But he who has the energetic manner of true natural speech, means, thinks, and feels all he says; and recites it with propriety and decorum indeed, but not so as to make these take the least of the attention.

“But the natural, colloquial style of delivery, should not be confounded with the negligent or the familiar. The natural style is one that is suited to the *sense, the subject*, the place, and the *occasion*; and this adaptation requires much intelligence, and a high sense of propriety. Thus, it will be seen, that there is considerable labour necessary in attaining the natural style of delivery. If we follow nature, there is no opportunity for *imitation*; a true conception of the subject and the occasion is the only thing that can direct us.

“But in all preparatory schools, where boys *learn to speak*, the whole attention of the orator and the instructor is given to the manner. The subject for recitation is one which neither interests the speaker nor the hearer, and the attention is given exclusively to the mode of delivery. Under the influence of such exercises, while the manners and habits are forming and becoming fixed, the scholar must acquire an unnatural, inefficient style of reading and speaking.”



There is not one public speaker out of five hundred who does not labour under the unhappy influence of this early artificial training. By the time scholars have passed through their preparatory schools they have acquired such an unnatural delivery that the professor of rhetoric in the college and professional seminary can do nothing more for the student than correct some of his bad habits. If the student ever makes an impressive speaker or reader, he must unlearn all he ever learned of elocution while attending to his preparatory studies. But unfortunately, only a very few are able to throw off these bad habits, and the feeble, artificial, affected delivery which they acquired in the elementary schools remains with the most of them for life.

But it will be asked, Would you abolish all kinds of public speaking and reading in primary and preparatory schools? Would you have no exercises in these schools, either in debate, dialogue, or declamation? Would you have our teachers give no instruction whatever in elocution? Our answer to these questions is, that we believe there are no qualifications or accomplishments more useful or ornamental than *good* reading and speaking; and that they deserve attention from the scholar and the teacher in proportion to their high value. We think it the duty of every elementary teacher to use every means in his power to make every American youth who may attend his instructions a good reader and a good speaker.

But we must beg leave to dissent again from the method and systems now made use of to accomplish this desirable end. We say, let there be none of the machinery of *art* about it; let nature be the teacher—let nature, ever ready and ever able, suggest the *manner*, and let not this be shaped and fashioned by art. If the school-boy has disagree-

able habits or ludicrous tricks when speaking or reading, let them be corrected; but, commencing with the boys before they have formed any decided manner whatever, we would respectfully recommend teachers to make use of such means as will now be described.

When children repeat the alphabet, and begin to spell easy words, the teacher should be careful that they preserve the common colloquial tones of voice. In making their first recitations, they are apt to raise the voice to the highest pitch, or to sink it to an inaudible whisper. The conversational tone is seldom employed. It is while learning to spell that children first learn to read and speak unnaturally. As soon as a book is put into their hands, they think it necessary (from their bad practice with the teacher) either to raise or sink the voice.

It is at this stage of their studies that children begin to acquire the habit of articulating indistinctly; of precipitating syllable after syllable, and of putting all the letters of the word into confusion. Now they begin to drawl or trail the letters, to abridge or prolong the syllables; and to pitch the voice on an unnatural key. If teachers are not attentive to children when they first begin to read, habits will be formed which will be corrected with great difficulty, or remain with the pupil through life. I would request those who have not observed the fact, to mark the unnatural manner in which almost all young children read. Let teachers, then, be careful that their pupils *learn* to spell and read in an easy, *natural* manner.

Another cause of bad reading is, teachers permit their scholars to read what they do not understand. The style or the subject of the reading lessons, which children are made to practise on, is usually such that no interest is felt in what is said; and the child receives little or no meaning from the words

he is compelled to pronounce. This makes the exercise a mere mechanical employment. The scholar obtains no information from the book, and hence never supposes it necessary to communicate any thing to his hearers.

If the pupil only pronounces the words with ease and rapidity, he gives the utmost satisfaction to himself and his teacher; the sentiment he never thinks of. The practice of pronouncing words, for months and years together, without affixing to them any meaning whatever, produces the very worst habit which children can possibly acquire. The words and the manner in which they deliver them, are all the children ever have attended to, and, in all probability, all they ever will attend to. Reading in this manner, during their early years, contributes greatly towards forming that monotonous, mechanical delivery which is so prevalent both in public and in private.

To prevent this exclusive attention to the words and manner only, the teacher should never suffer his scholars to read what they do not understand. He should convince his scholars, that the object of reading is to *perceive the sentiment* of the author, and to *convey it* clearly and forcibly to his hearers. He should labour to make his scholars become absorbed with the views, feelings, and sentiments of the writer; and to *withdraw* their attention wholly from themselves and their audience. If teachers do this, they will cure one great cause of so much disgraceful, offensive reading and speaking.

Again, school-boys select pieces for declamation in which they can feel no interest, and which have no interest or relation to the audience that is addressed. This ruinous practice the child commences when it first goes to school, and continues it till the education is finished, whether at an elementary school or at a professional college. Con-

tinued exercises like these will make any one insensible and unnatural in their delivery ; the effect, wherever the experiment has been made, has not been otherwise, nor can it; from the very nature of the exercise, be any thing else.

Teachers, then, should not allow their scholars to speak any thing of which they do not form a right conception, and in which they do not feel a lively interest. The subjects for declamation in schools should be those in which the speaker and the audience are deeply concerned. Such subjects and occasions can always be furnished by an ingenious teacher.

The school is a little world of fears and desires, of passions and interests, of ambition and dominion ; and the teacher may take advantage of these conflicting emotions, and secure the most absorbing interest in the debates and addresses of his pupils. For instance, the scholars request a holyday ; the teacher says that he is willing to gratify them, if they can convince him that it is right to do so. The scholars, now, are allowed to express their feelings, and present the claims of their petition.

The teacher hears them with attention, and replies to their arguments with fairness and respect. The scholars become deeply engaged in showing the reasonableness of their request. The teacher sees that decorum is preserved, and that each one has a fair chance in advocating the general cause. After the debate has continued a reasonable time, the teacher makes the decision according to the merits of the case. This is one among the many occurrences which daily offer themselves for giving a *real occasion* and a *real interest* to the debates and addresses of schoolboys. An ingenious teacher will always secure similar opportunities for rhetorical exercises in school.

If all teachers would do this, and see that the

scholars preserve a natural, colloquial tone of voice when they read and speak, and not allow them to read any thing but what they understand, there would be much more *natural speech* among scholars and public speakers. And this is the system of rhetoric which we would recommend teachers to adopt.

“And though the teacher will not attain perfection at once, yet he may be assured that while he steadily adheres to *this plan*, he is in the right road to it; instead of becoming, as in the other plan, more and more artificial the longer he studies. And every advance he makes will produce a proportionate effect; it will give him more and more of *that hold on the attention*, the understanding, and the feelings of the audience which no measured cadence and studied modulation can ever attain. As the perverted taste, now is, others may be more fortunate in escaping censure and ensuring admiration; but the natural reader or speaker will far more surpass them, in respect of the proper object of the orator, which is, *to carry his point*.”

## SECTION XXIII.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN COMMON SCHOOLS.

I AM so well pleased with what Mr. J. Abbot has said, in his “Teacher,” on religious instruction in schools, that I have thought it advisable to make some extracts from that valuable work. I shall also present some of M. Cousin’s reflections on this important subject. He says, page 259 of the American edition, “We have abundant proof that the well-

being of an individual, like that of a people, is no-wise secured by extraordinary intellectual powers or very refined civilization. The true happiness of an individual, as of a people, is founded on strict morality, self-government, humility, and moderation; on the willing performance of all duties to God, his superiors, and his neighbours.

“A religious and moral education is consequently the first want of a people.” Without this, every other education is not only without real utility, but in some respects dangerous. If, on the contrary, religious education has taken firm root, intellectual education will have complete success, and ought on no account to be withheld from the people, since God has endowed them with all the faculties for acquiring it, and since the cultivation of all the powers of man secures to him the means of reaching perfection, and, through that, supreme happiness.

“Religious and moral instruction, far from leading to presumption and a disputatious spirit, on the contrary, produces in man a consciousness of his weakness, and, as a consequence, humility. The object then should be, to give the people solid and practical knowledge, suited to their wants, which will naturally refine and soften their habits and manners.

“If such be the instruction the people ought to receive, that of the masters of the primary schools is at once determined, and the principles to be followed in the instruction of our pupils are equally clear.

“A more definite direction is given to religious and moral instruction by the belief in the revealed word of God in the Holy Scriptures. But this belief must not be simply historical, as amongst the learned; nor amuse itself with obscure and mystical notions; nor be expressed with affectation, in word, gesture, or deed. It ought rather so to penetrate the heart of man as to produce a constant endeavour to have his thoughts, sentiments, and actions in strictest har-

mony with the word of God. It is, then, on the living conviction of the truths and doctrines of Christianity, that we base the religious and moral character of our pupils. Without neglecting physical science, and the knowledge applicable to the arts of life, we must make moral science, which is of far higher importance, our main object. The mind and the character are what a true master ought, above all, to fashion. We must lay the foundations of moral life in the souls of our young masters, and therefore we must place religious instruction,—that is, to speak distinctly, Christian instruction,—in the first rank in the education of our normal schools. We must teach our children that religion which civilized our fathers; that religion whose liberal spirit prepared, and can alone sustain, all the great institutions of modern times. We must also permit the clergy to fulfil their first duty,—the superintendence of religious instruction. But in order to stand the test of this superintendence with honour, the schoolmaster must be enabled to give adequate religious instruction; otherwise, parents, in order to be sure that their children receive a good religious education, will require us to appoint ecclesiastics as schoolmasters, which, though assuredly better than having irreligious schoolmasters, would be liable to very serious objections of various kinds.

“The less we desire our schools to be ecclesiastical, the more ought they to be Christian. It necessarily follows, that there must be a course of special religious instruction in our normal schools. Religion is, in my eyes, the best—perhaps the only—basis of popular education. I know something of Europe, and never have I seen good schools where the spirit of Christian charity was wanting. Primary instruction flourishes in three countries, Holland, Scotland, and Germany; in all it is profoundly religious. It is said to be so in America.

“The little popular instruction I ever found in Italy came from the priests. In France, with few exceptions, our best schools for the poor are those of the *Frères de la doctrine Chrétienne*; (Brothers of the Christian doctrine.) These are facts which it is necessary to be incessantly repeating to certain persons. Let them go into the schools of the poor,—let them learn what patience, what resignation, are required to induce a man to persevere in so toilsome an employment. Have better nurses ever been found than those benevolent nuns who bestow on poverty all those attentions we pay to wealth? There are things in human society, sir, which can neither be conceived nor accomplished without virtue,—that is to say, when speaking of the mass without religion.

“The schools for the middle classes may be an object of speculation; but the country schools, the miserable little schools in the south, in the west, in Brittany, in the mountains of Auvergne, and, without going far, the lowest schools of our great cities, of Paris itself, will never hold out any adequate inducement to persons seeking a remunerating occupation. There will doubtless be some philosophers inspired with the ardent philanthropy of Saint Vincent de Paul, without his religious enthusiasm, who would devote themselves to this austere vocation; but the question is not to have here and there a master.

“We have more than forty thousand schools to serve, and it were wise to call religion to the aid of our insufficient means, were it but for the alleviation of the pecuniary burdens of the nation. Either you must lavish the treasures of the state, and the revenues of the *communes*, in order to give high salaries, and even pensions, to that new order of tradesmen called schoolmasters; or you must not imagine you can do without Christian charity, and



that spirit of poverty, humility, courageous resignation, and modest dignity, which Christianity, rightly understood and wisely taught, can alone give to the teachers of the people.

"The more I think of all this, sir, the more I look at the schools in this country, the more I talk with the directors of normal schools and counsellors of the ministry, the more I am strengthened in the conviction that we must make any efforts or any sacrifices to come to a good understanding with the clergy on the subject of popular education, and to constitute religion a special and very carefully-taught branch of instruction in our primary normal schools.

"I am not ignorant, sir, that this advice will grate on the ears of many persons, and that I shall be thought extremely *devot* at Paris. Yet it is not from Rome, but from Berlin, that I address you. The man who holds this language to you is a philosopher, formerly disliked, and even persecuted, by the priesthood; but this philosopher has a mind too little affected by the recollection of his own insults, and is too well acquainted with human nature and with history, not to regard religion as an indestructible power: genuine Christianity, as a means of civilization for the people, and a necessary support for those on whom society imposes irksome and humble duties, without the slightest prospect of fortune, without the least gratification of self-love."

"No more than grapes can be gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles, can any thing good be hoped from schoolmasters who are regardless of religion and of morality. For this reason religious instruction is placed at the head of all other parts of education: its object is to implant in the normal schools such a moral and religious spirit as ought to pervade the popular schools. The course of religious instruction has undergone no change from that stated in the report of last year; except that the several

classes have been united for the Biblical part. During the present year we propose to treat the concordance of the Gospels, the history of the Apostles, and some of the Epistles.

"The course adopted is this:—The series of the concordance is established and dictated\* by the master; the passages and discourses are explained, and, if thought expedient, learnt by heart by the pupils. For the catechising, or religious and moral instruction, properly so called, the classes are separated. The great catechism of Overberg is taken as a ground work; and we treat first of faith, then of morals, so that the latter may be intimately connected with the former, or to speak better, that morality may flow from faith as from its source.

"I regard religion as a disposition or affection of the soul, which unites man, in all his actions, with God; and he alone is truly religious who possesses this disposition and strives by every means to cherish it. In this view of the subject all morality is religious, because it raises man to God, and teaches him to live in God.

"I must confess, that in religious instruction I do not confine myself to any particular method; I try by meditation to bring the thing clearly before my own mind, and then to expound it intelligibly, in fitting language, with gravity and calmness, with unction and earnestness, because I am convinced that a clear exposition obliges the pupils to meditate, and excites interest and animation. Christianity ought to be the basis of the instruction of the people; we must not flinch from the open profession of this maxim; it is no less politic than it is honest. We baptize our children, and bring them up in the Christian faith and in the bosom of the church; in

\* The Professors of German Universities used to pronounce their lectures very slowly, in order that the pupils might write notes. This dictation is now nearly discontinued.—*Transl.*

after-life, age, reflection, the breath of human opinions, modify their early impressions, but it is good that these impressions should have been made by Christianity. Popular education ought therefore to be religious, that is to say, Christian; for, I repeat it, there is no such thing as religion in general; in Europe, and in our days, religion means Christianity. Let our popular schools then be Christian; let them be so entirely and earnestly.

“Difference of religion in Christian schools necessarily produces some differences in the religious instruction. This instruction shall always be adapted to the spirit and the dogmas of the church to which the school belongs. But as, in every school of a Christian state, the dominant spirit, common to all modes of faith, ought to be piety and a profound reverence for God, every school may receive children of another communion.

“Masters and inspectors must most carefully avoid every kind of constraint or annoyance to the children on account of their particular creed. No school shall be made abusively instrumental to any views of proselytism; and the children of a persuasion different from that of the school shall not be obliged, against the will of their parents, or their own, to attend the religious instruction or exercises in it.

“Private masters of their own creed shall be charged with their religious instruction; and in any place where it would be impossible to have as many masters as there are forms of belief, parents must the more sedulously perform those duties themselves, if they do not wish their children to follow the religious instructions given in the school.”—*Cousin's Report*.

Says Mr. J. Abbot, on this point,—“*The teacher is employed for a specific purpose, and he has no right to wander from that purpose, except as far as he can go with the common consent of his employers.*”

"Now the common ground, on religious subjects, is very broad. There are, indeed, many principles which are, in my view, essential parts of Christianity, which are subjects of active discussion among us ; but, setting these aside, there are other principles equally essential, in regard to which the whole community are agreed ; or, if at least there is a dissenting minority, it is so small that it is hardly to be considered. Let us look at some of these principles.

"1. Our community is agreed that *there is a God*. There is probably not a school in our country where the parents of the scholars would not wish to have the teacher, in his conversation with his pupils, take this for granted, and allude reverently and judiciously to that great Being, with the design of leading them to realize his existence and to feel his authority.

"2. Our community are agreed that *we are responsible to God for all our conduct*. Though some persons absurdly pretend to believe that the Being who formed this world, if indeed they think there is any such Being, has left it and its inhabitants to themselves, not inspecting their conduct, and never intending to call them to an account ; these are too few among us to need consideration. A difference of opinion on this subject might embarrass the teacher in France, and in other countries in Europe, but not here.

"However negligent men may be in *obeying* God's commands, they do almost universally, in our country, admit in theory the authority from which they come ; and believing this, the parent, even if he is aware that he himself does not obey these commands, chooses to have his children taught to respect them. The teacher will thus be acting with the consent of his employers in almost any part of our country, in endeavouring to influence his pupils to perform moral duties, not merely from worldly motives,

nor from mere abstract principles of right and wrong, but *from regard to the authority of God.*

"3. The community are agreed, too, in the belief of *the immortality of the soul.* They believe, almost without exception, that there is a future state of being, to which this is introductory and preparatory, and almost every father and mother in our country wish their children to keep this in mind, and to be influenced by it in all their conduct.

"4. The community are agreed that *we have a revelation from heaven.* I believe there are very few instances where the parents would not be glad to have the Bible read from time to time, its geographical and historical meanings illustrated, and its moral lessons brought to bear upon the hearts and lives of their children.

"Of course, if the teacher is so unwise as to make such a privilege, if it were allowed him, the occasion of exerting an influence upon one side or the other of some question which divides the community around him, he must expect to excite jealousy and distrust, and to be excluded from a privilege which he might otherwise have been permitted freely to enjoy. There may, alas! be some cases where the use of the Scriptures is altogether forbidden in school; but probably in almost every such case, it would be found, that it was from fear of its perversion to sectarian or party-purposes, and not to any unwillingness to have the Bible used in the way I have described.

"5. The community are agreed in theory that *personal attachment to the Supreme Being is the duty of every human soul*; and every parent, with exceptions so few that they are not worth naming, wishes that his children should cherish that affection, and yield their hearts to its influence. He is willing, therefore, that the teacher, of course without interfering with the regular duties for the per-

formance of which he holds his office, should, from time to time, speak of this duty—of God's goodness to men, of his daily protection, his promised favours,—as to awaken, if possible, this attachment in the hearts of his children.

“Of course, it is very easy for the teacher, if he is so disposed, to abuse this privilege also. He can, under pretence of awakening and cherishing the spirit of piety in the hearts of his pupils, present the subjects in such aspects and relations as to arouse the sectarian or denominational feelings of some of his employers. But I believe, if this was honestly and fully avoided, there are few, if any, parents in our country who would not be gratified to have the great principle of love to God manifest itself in the instructions of the school-room, and showing itself by its genuine indications in the hearts and conduct of their children.

“6. The community are agreed, not only in believing that piety consists primarily in love to God, but that *the life of piety is to be commenced by penitence for past sins, and forgiveness, in some way or other, through a Saviour*. I am aware that one class of theological writers, in the heat of controversy, charge the other, that Jesus Christ was nothing more or less than a teacher of religion, and there are, unquestionably, individuals who take this view.

“But these individuals are few. There are very few in our community who do not, in some sense, look upon Jesus Christ as our Saviour,—our Redeemer; who do not feel themselves *in some way* indebted to him, for the offer of pardon. There may be, here and there, a theological student, or a contributor to the columns of a polemical magazine, who ranks Jesus Christ with Moses and with Paul. But the great mass of the fathers and mothers of every name and denomination, through all the ranks

of society, look up to the Saviour of sinners with something, at least, of the feeling that he is the object of extraordinary affection and reverence. I am aware, however, that I am approaching the limit, which, in many parts of our country, ought to bound the religious influence of the teacher in a public school; and on this subject, as on every other, he ought to do nothing, directly or indirectly, which would be displeasing to those who have intrusted children to his care.

“So much ground, it seems, the teacher may occupy, by common consent, in New England, and it certainly is a great deal: It may be doubted whether, after all our disputes, there is a country in the world whose inhabitants have so much in common in regard to religious belief. There is, perhaps, no country in the world where the teacher may be allowed to do so much towards leading his pupils to fear God, and to obey his commands, with the cordial consent of their parents, as he can here.”

“The ground which I have been laying out is common all over our country; in particular places there will be even much more that is common; of course the teacher, in such cases, will be at much greater liberty. If a Roman Catholic community establish a school, and appoint a Roman Catholic teacher, he may properly, in his intercourse with his scholars, allude, with commendation, to the opinions and practices of that church. If a college is established by a Methodist denomination, the teacher of that institution may, of course, explain and enforce there, the views of that society. Each teacher is confined only to *those views which is common to the founders and supporters of the particular institution to which he is attached.*

“I trust the principle which I have been attempting to enforce is fully before the reader’s mind,

namely, that moral and religious instruction in school being in a great degree extra-official in nature, must be carried no farther than the teacher can go with the common consent, either explicit or implied, of those who have founded and support his school. Of course, if those founders forbid it altogether, they have a right to do so, and the teacher must submit.

"The only question that can justly arise is, whether he will remain in such a situation, or seek employment where a door of usefulness, here closed against him, will be opened. While he remains, ~~he must~~ fully and honestly submit to the wishes of those in whose hands Providence has placed the ultimate responsibility of training up the children of his school. It is only for a partial and specific purpose that they are placed under his care.

"The religious reader may inquire why I am so anxious to restrain, rather than to urge on, the exercise of religious influence in schools. 'There is far too little,' some one will say, 'instead of too much; and teachers need to be encouraged and led on in this duty, not to be restrained from it.' There is, indeed, far too little religious influence exerted in common schools. What I have said has been intended to prepare a way for an increase of it. My view of it is this:

"If teachers do universally confine themselves to limits which I have been attempting to define, they may accomplish, within these limits, a vast amount of good. By attempting, however, to exceed them, the confidence of parents is destroyed or weakened, and the door closed. In this way, injury to a very great extent has been, in many parts of our country, done. Parents are led to associate with the very idea of religion, indirect, and perhaps secret, efforts to influence their children in a way which they themselves would disapprove.



They transfer to the cause of piety itself, the dislike which was first awakened by exceptionable means to promote it; and other teachers, seeing these evil effects, are deterred from attempting what they might easily and pleasantly accomplish. Before, therefore, attempting to enforce the duty, and explain the methods of exerting religious influence in school, I thought proper distinctly to state with what restrictions, and within what limits, the work is to be done.

“There are many teachers who profess to cherish the spirit, and to entertain the hopes of piety, who yet make no effort whatever to extend its influence to the hearts of their pupils. Others appeal sometimes to religious truth, merely to assist them in the government of the school. They perhaps bring it before the minds of disobedient pupils in a vain effort to make an impression upon the conscience of one who has done wrong, and who cannot by other means be brought to submission. But the pupil in such cases understands, or, at least, he believes that the teacher applies to religious truth only to eke out his own authority, and, of course, it produces no effect.

“Another teacher thinks he must, to discharge his duty, give a certain amount weekly, of what he considers religious instruction. He accordingly appropriates a regular portion of time to a formal lecture or exhortation, which he delivers without regard to the mental habits of thought and feeling which prevail among his charge. He forgets that the heart must be led, not driven to piety; and that unless his efforts are adapted to the nature of the minds he is acting upon, and suited to influence them, he must as certainly fail of success as when there is a want of adaptedness between the means and the end in any other undertaking whatever.”

## PART II.

### SECTION I.

#### EVILS FROM IGNORANCE.

POPULAR ignorance is an enormous national evil. The ignorance, almost total, of seven-eighths of the British people, to say nothing of the deep reproach with which it covers us, is full of danger to our social system, and even affects deeply our daily well-being. A great proportion of our burdens must be placed to its account; it peoples our prisons and our hospitals, desolates our land with pauperism, and taxes us for the costly machinery of police establishments and criminal judicature, while it largely deducts from the happiness of every feeling man, to witness and live surrounded by the nameless and numberless sufferings which it entails upon an immense portion of our countrymen. From these sufferings *they* have a claim on that system called the Nation, for deliverance.—*Simpson*.

WHEN we look into the history of this world, two things are seen upon nearly every page,—man's ignorance and man's wickedness. History presents another truth; the most ignorant individuals and nations have been the most vicious and degraded. The present condition of the world reveals slavery and misery where the people are ignorant, and liberty and happiness where there is mental and moral light. When the mind is not improved by virtue and knowledge, it will be governed and debased by the passions and appetites, and employed in planning and executing that which destroys happiness and prevents improvement.

How far human suffering may be attributed to ignorance, or how many of the evils which have

and do exist among the inhabitants of this earth originated from ignorance, would be difficult to ascertain ; but we do see and know enough, to say, that the amount of suffering from ignorance is immeasurable, and that the evils are innumerable. Ignorance has not only multiplied evils, by misapplying what is good, but has given an imaginary existence to many of the most fearful nature, and which have long distressed and enslaved the human race.

“While ignorant of the laws of nature, man has connected with some of her most beautiful and benevolent operations, false and imaginary terrors. Before the sun of knowledge has poured light upon the mental darkness of a tribe or nation, an eclipse of the sun in the heavens is viewed by the terrified and trembling beholders with the utmost dismay and consternation. The ignorant have supposed the moon, while in an eclipse, or what is the same thing, while passing through the shadow of the earth, was sickening or dying through the influence of enchanters.

“To appease the enemies of their evening luminary, they have practised the most torturing and irrational ceremonies, and submitted themselves to the most excruciating pain. Many tribes and nations are still enslaved by these foolish notions and cruel customs. The appearance of comets, too, are still regarded as forerunners of earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and the most dreadful calamities. They know not that comets are regular bodies belonging to our system, and appear and disappear at stated periods of time. After a slight knowledge of the heavenly bodies, the appearance of a comet excites as little fear as the appearance of the sun.

“Ignorance has admitted into the minds of men many absurd notions respecting *judicial astrology*, which have destroyed the peace and happiness of

many tribes and nations. They have supposed that the characters and destinies of men are fixed, by the appearance of certain stars, or the meetings of certain planets at the time of birth. Under this belief, the most foolish and unfounded apprehensions, and the most delusive hopes have been entertained, either to torture or disappoint the mind.

“A small acquaintance with the planetary bodies will show that such fears and hopes have the greatest absurdity; for it is easily seen, that although these bodies may affect the earth, they can never affect the qualities of the mind, or the operations of moral causes. Notwithstanding the absurdity of these doctrines of astrology, the most learned nations of antiquity have believed them; and by them have been thrown into the greatest disorder, agony, and despair.

“The arbiters, or astrologers, who observed the planets and other natural appearances, and foretold the fortunes of the ignorant multitude, raised themselves to great authority, and, like other impostors, demanded exorbitant fees for their lying services. These are some of the natural and regular planetary laws and phenomena which the ignorance of man has made objects of alarm, terror, and apprehension.

“On the earth, ignorance has seen innumerable objects which have bewildered and distracted the timid and credulous. The *ignes fatui* are regarded as malicious spirits, sent to lead the traveller astray, and, in the end, conduct him to the place of torment. A little knowledge would enable any one to see, that these meteors are nothing more than harmless lights, formed by the burning of a certain gas or vapour which naturally rises from the moist soil over which they are always seen.”\*

Ignorance has created distressing fears from the

\* Dick on the Improvement of Society.

ticking noise of an insect, heard during the stillness of night—from the scream of a bird—from the howl of a dog—from the fall of a chimney—from an accidental noise in an unoccupied apartment of a suspected dwelling—from an immediate return after something that had been forgotten—from having put on a garment with the inside turned out—from having set out on a journey, or undertaken some employment on Friday—from an unusual noise in a boiling tea-kettle.

From a ringing in the ear (supposed to be the echo of a tolling bell for some deceased friend)—from meeting with a snake lying in the road—from upsetting the salt-dish—from the sudden and accidental striking of a silent clock—from breaking a looking-glass—from seeing the new moon over the left shoulder—from not having uncovered the head while a funeral procession passed—from missing the mouth while taking food—from being presented with a knife or any cutting instrument, and from its raining into the grave of a friend before it was closed.

All of these whims, and thousands of others of a similar nature, have been regarded with apprehensions of terror, as the forerunners of impending disasters, or of approaching death! Such is the slavery and misery of ignorance; continually filling the ideal world with objects which vassal the mind, and preventing those feelings of gratitude and veneration which are due to the wise Creator and Governor of the universe.

The ignorant and superstitious (and none are superstitious but the ignorant or the improperly educated) are constantly seeing spectres which make the heart faint and the joints tremble—Hobgoblins, with their gigantic forms and unearthly voices—Fairies, with their ever-changing bodiless forms, now a monster, and now the least of airy nothings,

with their gigantic workings or their silent invisible spells and magical charms—Satyrs, with their ghastly and satanic errands and influences.

Imps, Wraiths, and Genii, with their powers of making all under their control wild and miserable—Witches, who inflict incurable diseases, and torment the souls of the departed; with their powers of transforming human beings into horses, cats, and mermaids; and having thrown the bridle over them, cause them to traverse the air on the wings of the wind, over bridgeless rivers, and through the caverns and whirlpools of the ocean—and Wizards, who are supposed to turn men into fiends, and call back the spirits of the dead, and put mortals into the society of the ghostly, sepulchral world, and who magically deceive and destroy mortals by an inscrutable agency with the devil.

All of these beings and agencies, ignorance places in the ideal world. It fills the air with apparitions and terrifying phantoms, which stalk forth in the silence of night to alarm the weak and timid. From the lonely churchyard, and the dark deep woods, the ignorant hear supernatural voices, and see monstrous shapes.

Such is the tyranny and misery of the ignorant! Who can know the bondage and suffering which the illiterate feel! and who is there that does not desire knowledge which at once frees him from all these deadly fears and galling fetters?—for ignorance has given existence to every ideal being we have mentioned.

Besides these ideal beings and agencies, which are for ever present with the ignorant to terrify and distress, there are also a great many foolish and erroneous opinions which pass current for genuine truths among the uninformed part of mankind. These apothegms, or trite sayings, have a wonderful practical influence; they are at once the philosophy and

the guide of the vulgar or the uneducated. The world is full of these proverbs or maxims, and it is to be lamented that so many of them are false, that the ignorant are not able to discriminate and judge for themselves, but are so frequently rendered foolish, and led astray by them.

These are some of the whimsical and false sayings which all must have frequently heard. That a man has one rib less than a woman; that the city of Jerusalem is in the centre of the world; that the tenth wave of the sea is more dangerous than any other; that all animals on the land have others like them in the sea; that the ocean and some lakes have no bottom; that white powder kills without making a noise; that all of the stars are lighted by the sun.

That a burning candle, made of human fat, will prevent a sleeping man from waking; that young toads are rained down; that the weather of the last Friday of the month foretells the weather of the following month; that a warm winter will be followed by a cold summer; that the winter is cold because the sun is farther from the earth; that ignorance is bliss; that little learning is a dangerous thing; that genius can do nothing without leisure and teachers; that men of business have no time to study; that what is everybody's business is nobody's.

That a man may know too much for his business; that ignorance is an excuse for crime; that the rich only are happy; that all things are useless which are not practical; that it makes no difference what a man believes, if he is only sincere; that the lazy man gets the most game; that the foolish labour, but the idle reap; that there is but one penny, and the idle get it; that the world owes all a living; and that a man may be too religious.

To all of these, *and many more*, ignorance and credulity have given assent! How little of the true nature of things do the ignorant know, and

how easily they may be imposed upon. Have not the errors which influence society been the cause of more evil than depravity itself? The great majority of the human race have been blinded by these notions and false maxims, and they still prevail in the United States to a great extent.

*When such absurdities and falsehoods are believed, the mind is made incapable of reasoning correctly on any subject, and in a short time becomes degraded to the lowest degree. How painful to see so many rational and immortal minds unfitted for moral and intellectual growth and enjoyment! How painful to see so many who will never feel the dignity of their nature, or fulfil the end of their being!*

Ignorance and error have always led to the commission of deeds of cruelty and rank injustice. In heathen countries, how many millions of lives have been poured out, and how much pain and agony from bodily torture, through ignorance of the true nature and worship of God! Through ignorance, how cruel has been the oppression in every land and nation of unjust laws and tyrannical institutions! Through ignorance and error, how merciless and bloody have been the thousands of persecutions which have filled the earth with violence, and covered it with blood! On whatever portion of the world or period of time we place the eye, we shall see that ignorance, vice, and misery have been, and are inseparable.

But there are other evils arising from ignorance, equally distressing to the mind and destructive to the body, as any we have described or enumerated. They are those which the ignorant bring upon themselves by not perceiving and conforming to the natural relations which exist between themselves and the objects around them.



Relations which must at all times be our law and our rule of action, if we are kept in the path of true happiness; but these relations are not known and obeyed by the illiterate, for they are ignorant of themselves and the qualities of natural objects. They have never looked upon themselves as animal, intellectual, and moral beings, and learned that happiness cannot be found and possessed, except the intellectual and moral faculties have the supremacy or the control over the animal nature.

Not having their moral and intellectual nature developed, or put in exercise by mental and moral instruction, they are ignorant of any other happiness but that derived from the gratification of their lowest natures—their animal appetites and passions. In this they are disappointed; for when the animal nature is properly gratified, its pleasures are not sufficient to satisfy a being who has an intellectual and moral nature. This kind of gratification may satisfy brutes, for they do not possess consciousness or reflection.

The pleasures of sense continue but a short time, for they soon lose their relish,—soon become blunted or disordered, and lose all power of pleasing. And the man who has lost the pleasures of their proper gratification, tries their improper and excessive exercise; and by this means destroys his body, and cuts himself off for ever from intellectual and moral enjoyment. The sensual nature is in an unhealthy state, and the mind in subjection to it.

Here, evidently, is the chief cause of human evils and affliction; *a diseased, sensual nature, and its dominion over the moral and intellectual nature.* A man in this condition (and there are multitudes without number in it) is full of imaginary anxieties, teased by ungovernable appetites and passions, which can never be gratified, and finding tastelessness in

all his shifts and efforts after that which he has long since unfitted himself for enjoying.\*

One great office of the mind is to keep the body from excesses and injury, but it never performs this office unless it is illuminated by truth and knowledge. While the mind remains ignorant, and the affections of the heart unlawfully placed, there is no government over the appetites and passions, and their unrestrained gratification soon brings misery and destruction. There is a voice coming from every individual in the long catalogue of the human family, telling us that men need knowledge to overpower their passions, to master their prejudices, and to render them happy.

## SECTION II.

### ADVANTAGES OF KNOWLEDGE.

THE value of knowledge, and the advantage it gives its possessor, may be seen in a variety of ways. The evils of ignorance were shown by directing the attention to the fears and sufferings of those individuals and nations upon whom the light of knowledge has never shone. In the same way

\* There exist no adequate means, either in private families or public institutions, with the exception of Infant-schools, for educating the feelings, improving the dispositions, restraining the inferior propensities, and exercising the higher sentiments,—in short, for MORAL TRAINING. In all this we took our chance, and picked up what we might from partial parents, nursery maids, and juvenile companions. The animal feelings being the strongest, acted in us with all the blindness and all the power of instincts, and laid a broad and deep foundation for habitual selfishness.—*Simpson.*

we might show the advantages of knowledge by referring to the means of happiness, and the enjoyments of those nations where the individuals are enlightened ; where the sun of knowledge has shone upon the whole people.

By comparing an ignorant people with one that is enlightened, we shall see that knowledge prevents those crimes and cruelties which render a nation dishonoured and debased ; while on the other hand, it has conferred the means of improvement and enjoyment which has made a nation prosperous, honoured, and happy. If all could make such a comparison between a literate and illiterate people, as to obtain the aggregate of the pains and pleasures which each suffers and enjoys, we would want no other proof of the advantages of knowledge, than the one this comparison would present.

But there are few, if any, who do this. The greatest number of any people are but imperfectly acquainted with their own condition ; they know not the distinguishing privileges which they may possess ; nor the wretchedness of their condition when compared with the more favoured. And when men are conscious of possessing comforts which they see are denied to others, they seldom think of that which makes the difference.

They are contented with their enjoyments, and appear insensible to that which produced them. The ignorant and the wretched know not the conveniences which the enlightened possess, nor the enjoyment of the exercise of their moral and intellectual nature, and are therefore contented with their wretched existence. Thus, since the exalted are indifferent to that which gave them their distinction, and the debased to that which might improve their condition, it will be well to consider some of the advantages of knowledge which have blessed the one, and which may assist the other.

Knowledge, by showing the true principles and nature of things, *will prevent those evils which originate in ignorance.* The phenomena of nature, which were once beheld with alarm, will be converted by the enlightened into sources of enjoyment, and be contemplated with emotions of delight. They will watch the appearance of these phenomena with joy and eagerness, that they may form more enlarged and correct ideas of their Great Creator. The enlightened will be less deceived by the false maxims and philosophy in the world.

They will throw off the oppression of their fellow-men, and claim their freedom and their rights. That which their Creator intended for a good and a blessing, they may no longer abuse by ignorant perversions. They will see the relations which they have to their fellow-men, to society, and to the constitution of the world; and having seen these natural laws which the Creator has given for their rule of life, they will be more disposed to obey them, and thus receive the reward of obedience. The enlightened may greatly increase their own happiness and the happiness of mankind, by contributing to the advancement of the useful arts and sciences.

All science is founded upon facts; these facts are obtained by observing Nature; and who is there that has a better opportunity for making such observations than the intelligent farmer. Nature is his companion; her wonderful productions and changes are constantly before him. Nature and he are co-workers, toiling hand in hand to supply the world's returning wants.

He sees Nature in her most secret workings, acts with her in her silent operations, and wherever he may be, he may learn a lesson from her instructions which will enable him to inform the wise, and make him a teacher from the great school of the Creator. He may be daily collecting facts which will establish or

destroy some doubtful principle, or be the means of creating a new science to benefit the world as long as time shall last.

The intelligent practical man is able to make a fair trial of the projected improvements of the theorist, and thus secure a good or prevent an imposition. The labouring man has taught the world many of its most useful lessons; and a great part of that knowledge which is now multiplying the necessities, and increasing the pleasures of life, has been furnished by the observing farmer or the skilful mechanic. If all men were intelligent enough to *think* when they *observe*, and active enough to *observe* when they *think*, how much that is useful, but unknown, would soon be discovered!

*Knowledge will make mechanics more skilful in the arts*; for every art is founded on scientific principles, and he who has a knowledge of the principles of a science, must be more skilful in the practice of the arts, and will be prepared to carry them to the highest point of improvement. It should be the desire of every one to furnish the head with such knowledge that it will be able to assist the hands.

A mechanic, by exercising his ingenuity and the powers of a cultivated mind, might save himself much of that labour which he will otherwise be obliged to go through. Every mechanic may lessen and lighten his daily task, if he will but inform his mind in the nature and principles of his art, as well as practise his limbs in the mechanical exercise of the trade. Knowledge would not only render mechanics more skilful, but would enable them to produce articles of greater perfection.

That which is done by a mere habit of muscular movement, cannot have that perfection and finish which the mind in co-operation could have given it. There is no part of mechanism whatever, that can

be well understood, or profitably employed, without more or less knowledge of the principles of its action. We every day see intelligent mechanics who make better articles and obtain a higher price for them than the more ignorant of the same trade are able to do. When intelligence comes in to aid mechanical skill, it will always obtain the advantage.

An ignorant artist is not able to judge of the good or bad qualities of the materials which he must use in the manufacture of his articles. He is liable to be deceived in these, and thus loses all his labour. Good and bad materials are always in market, and he who has knowledge sufficient to discriminate, and form a right estimation of the comparative values of each, will secure many good bargains, and escape many impositions.

We see, also, the decided advantage which the intelligent agriculturist has over his less informed neighbours. The ignorant do as their fathers have done, and know not that there are improvements in the implements of husbandry. They know not that the cultivation of the soil can be far better understood by a little inquiry into its nature, and by a knowledge of that which is adapted to invigorate it.

A profitable culture of the soil requires no inconsiderable knowledge of the best manner of preparing it for the several grains or grasses. To know what soil is best adapted to a particular grain—to choose the best time for sowing and reaping—to judge of the qualities of grains—and to perceive when the soil should rest, and when it should be active, require long study and a well cultivated mind.

A good education is necessary, that *you may be profited by* PUBLIC INSTRUCTIONS. In the earlier part of life—during that time which is spent in school—you should obtain the *means* of acquiring knowledge. After you have gone from the school-room and the instructor, you should be prepared to

receive that more general and higher instruction which the public affords ; such as is offered by public lectures on the sciences, intended to show the connexion between science, and the practical purposes of life ; the public instructions on the Sabbath ; and the information that may be had by attending the several courts of justice, which may sit from time to time where you dwell or in the neighbouring vicinity.

It will also require a disciplined, improved mind, to profit by the intelligent conversation of those who have had higher advantages of education. Every individual may find much improvement in either or all of these kinds of public instruction, *if he has a mind so far improved as to desire and love knowledge.*

It is too frequently seen that young men prefer places of noisy merriment, or vicious resort, to places of moral and mental improvement. One great cause of this unhappy preference is their defective early education. They have not intelligence sufficient to enable them to take an interest in literary subjects, or public questions, and they feel disinclined to attend the discussions.

Therefore they are excluded from the society of the virtuous and better informed, and are ready to be enticed into scenes of dishonour or injustice, and finally to become outcasts of society. Young men should have obtained that education which will exempt them from these alluring temptations, and that will give them a desire to seize every opportunity for improving their minds with useful knowledge.

The preacher from the pulpit addresses hundreds of his congregation, who, through ignorance, "have ears and hear not ;" and he puts the book of life into their hands, but they are ignorant, and "have eyes and see not." Their education has been

neglected, or they have voluntarily deprived themselves of it, and their feeble minds and limited attainments prevent them from receiving those instructions which would have strengthened their virtues, and have shown them the folly of their evil ways.

An intelligent public is a constant teacher, and the instructions are of the most practical nature; and all have the opportunity, more or less, of receiving its lessons. Yet, but very few have that active state of mind, and those elementary and necessary attainments, which would patronise and encourage such instruction, and make them interesting and profitable.

We know that there is a want of confidence in public lecturers; too many of these teachers have promised what they were unable to perform; yet, it will not be denied but that there are many, who, if they were listened to by intelligent minds, would communicate much which would be both pleasing and useful. The reason that the public is so frequently deceived with mere pretenders, is its inability to appreciate, and unwillingness to reward those who are better.

That the public may desire and invite sound, valuable knowledge, the people must receive that kind and amount of preparatory instruction which will make them eager for higher attainments, and capable of making use of their knowledge, either as means of intellectual growth, or of amusement, or of assistance in the practical purposes of life. The ignorant know not their daily loss from being disqualified to encourage and understand these public instructions.

In the present age, knowledge is separated from the technicalities and precluding forms which formerly placed it beyond the common walks of life, and is simplified and diffused through the whole



community. If a man will obtain a good elementary education, he can, under the present improvements, have access to all the higher branches of literature and science.

If he will but lay a good foundation in those primary schools which are open to all, he may raise a noble, beautiful superstructure, and this with but very little assistance from others. Knowledge is brought to the door of every individual, and the only requirements that are made for his receiving it, almost gratis, are such culture and discipline of mind as will fit him for the instruction.

• We believe, then, that every youth will see that a good education, or a certain degree of elementary knowledge, is necessary to prepare him for being benefited by the valuable instructions of the public. And by looking at the honours and rewards of those who have improved these public privileges, they will see the advantages of knowledge.

Knowledge, again, would qualify men for *judging correctly of human character and human enjoyment*. There are many false characters, and false appearances of happiness, which will deceive the illiterate, but will be detected by the intelligent. The ignorant are very frequently deceived and made wretched, by putting their trust in those who have the deceptive power of appearing what they are not.

They are necessarily more dependent upon others, but unfortunately less capable of discriminating between honesty and villany—a protecting friend and a betraying enemy. When men are brought together, the intelligent will govern, they will have a controlling influence in society; but as all of the intelligent are not virtuous and honest, it frequently requires a considerable degree of knowledge on the part of others to expose their sophistry and their abuse of power.

The uneducated, or, what is almost the same thing,

the poorly educated, are very liable not only to form wrong estimates of individual worth, but to consider certain possessions and distinctions among men to be the true means of happiness. For these, in their ignorance, they put forth every effort, and make every sacrifice; depriving themselves of the comforts of the situation they have, that they may reach that which will be unsatisfying when possessed.

A little knowledge would have convinced them that happiness arises from no condition, but is always found with the virtuous, industrious, and contented. A little reflection or philosophy would tell them that the rich and the gay are not necessarily happy, and that he only can be happy who has a well cultivated mind, and a well ordered life.

The advantages of knowledge are seen, likewise, when we are capable of making a distinction between books and periodicals which are *valuable*, and those that are *pernicious*. Ever since the invention of signs of thought, men in all countries have written for their contemporaries, and for posterity. Many of these writings or books are good, and many of them are bad. Some contain noble, purifying sentiments; but others that which is false and corrupting.

The latter are addressed to the depraved taste of readers, and have ready and extensive circulation. These deceive, unless there is intelligence to detect their speciousness. They will certainly be read, unless the mind has been educated in such a manner that it can see their seductive, polluting tendency. To make a right discrimination among the multitude of books which are brought into the market, require a sound education and considerable knowledge.

The ignorant are often deceived, and seriously injured, by not perceiving the tendency of works which they may purchase or be requested to read; and the advantages of knowledge are great when we are selecting books for our own reading, or for that of our

friends. An uncultivated mind, too, will always prefer something that is frivolous and unworthy of its attention; but the mind that has rightly commenced its search after truth and knowledge, will reject that which is low and trifling, and secure that which is worthy of its high powers and immortal existence.

The privilege which an educated reading man has of *knowing what is transacting in the world*, is of great importance to himself and to others. The illiterate know but little beyond the boundaries of their daily labours; their minds are cramped within the narrow circle which they are obliged to keep, and they are wholly excluded from a participation in those great subjects which are interesting a part of their fellow-beings.

The papers, which contain a day's or a week's history of the living, acting world, have no interest to them; but to a man, whose mind has been enlarged by knowledge, and made acquainted with the condition of his country, and the great changes that are constantly taking place in it, the news of the daily or weekly press is hailed with interest and with delight.

There is a criminal apathy or an erroneous impression in the ignorant, in relation to public affairs, which is disgraceful to themselves and injurious to their country. A friend to his country will make himself one of its intelligent members, and correctly inform himself of all its important interests and movements.

This information will make him a desirable and profitable companion, and all will see that his intelligence gives him many advantages, and a much greater influence than he otherwise would have. Let every young man, then, who wishes to be acceptable to his friends and useful to his country, obtain some information of what is going on in the

world; and let him so educate his mind, that he will be able to use or communicate this information with credit to himself and benefit to others.

Knowledge would cause all, after an honest examination, to see the *evidence of revealed religion, and its harmony with natural revelation*. An unlimited credulity or a dangerous skepticism is the certain companion of ignorance. An intelligent, honest mind rejects that which is not biblical, and believes and obeys that which is. The man who has been educated to think for himself, can discern an internal evidence in every part of the Christian revelation; an evidence that is clear, full, and satisfactory.

And he who is intelligent may look into the evidence from testimony, and see one strong, unbroken chain of testimonial proof, running back from the present moment to the very time when the prophets and apostles proclaimed their inspired message to a guilty world. And he who can look into the providence or works of the Creator, will find the same revelation of the Eternal One and his will concerning man that is made known in the Scriptures.

Indeed, the Bible is the mouth of Nature; if we will listen to its voice, all the truths in creation's volume are heard and known. The same infinite love for his creatures in the one that we see in the other; the same moral government in constant exercise over men, that is made known in the Scriptures; the same reward of virtue and punishment of vice here taking place on the earth (though not in so perfect a manner now) that will be distributed in the world hereafter.

Whoever will look, may see the same government commenced on earth that is made known in the Bible, and that is to continue through eternity. The individual who has intelligence sufficient to examine the influence, the testimonial proof, and the

corroborative evidence in the ways and works of God, will find that there is no truth on earth so well established as the truth of the Bible. And who does not desire knowledge, when it can give us satisfaction on this great subject?

The ignorant cannot examine for themselves; they must believe, because others say there is evidence; but they know that man does not always tell the truth, and that he may, from some personal interest, wish to deceive his fellow-men: this want of confidence in man makes what he says doubtful; and there is always with those who cannot examine for themselves, an uncertainty and a distressing anxiety respecting the truth of the Bible. The advantages of knowledge are unspeakable, if it should do nothing more than settle this momentous question. Let every one, then, respect his powers, and know for himself.

*Knowledge assists us in forming more enlarged and correct conceptions of the Deity.* He is known through his attributes, and unless the mind has been enlarged and accustomed to form an adequate idea of these, his nature will not be perceived. It is difficult for the mind that has always seen body and spirit united, to divest the Deity of matter, and view him as a Spirit all powerful, all knowing, and always present. It requires deep abstraction and a steady vision.

The ignorant must necessarily form very erroneous ideas of the nature and existence of their Creator. He reveals himself by the greatness of his doings and the immensity of his works; and except the mind in some measure can understand these, it will know but little of its Maker and its Judge. How necessary is knowledge, that we may know the nature and the government of Him "with whom we have to do."

Knowledge is necessary, likewise, *that we may*

*know in what true happiness consists.* The Creator has annexed pleasure to some actions and pain to others; he has made the desire and possession of some things to be the means of happiness, and the desire and possession of other things, the means of unhappiness; and we have the capacity of knowing beforehand what actions and objects will make us happy, and likewise what will make us unhappy.

But this knowledge will not be forced upon us; we have only the ability to know; the knowledge which will ensure a right conduct, and consequently a happy life, may be had if we choose to possess it. We are formed for observing objects, for comparing them together, for laying down principles, and for inferring consequences. And man was made to be happy; and this earth and all things in it and upon it were made for his happiness. All that is necessary is, that man improve his faculties, and *know* what is good and what is evil, and then desire the former and refuse the latter.\*

\* Those who are what is called religiously educated, are not more fortunate; because no sect in religion has yet addressed itself to the duty of teaching the nature of man, the value of pursuits in life, the institutions of society, and the relation of all these to the religious and moral faculties of man; without understanding these, no person entering upon active life can see his way clearly, or entertain consistent or elevated views of duty, and the true sources of happiness.—*Simpson.*

## SECTION III.

THE NECESSITY OF GENERAL INTELLIGENCE IN A  
FREE GOVERNMENT.

Here, the press is hotter, the strife keener, the invention more alive, the curiosity more awake, the wants and wishes more stimulated by an atmosphere of luxury, than perhaps in any country since the world began. The men who, in their several classes, were content to tread step for step in the paths wherein their fathers trod, are gone. Society is no longer a calm current, but a tossing sea.

Reverence for tradition, for authority, is gone. In such a state of things, who can deny the absolute necessity for national education?—*Preface to Cousin's Report.*

WHEN the people govern, they should be virtuous and intelligent. They should be not only willing to obey the laws, but competent to make them. The very foundation of a republican government is based on good morals, and a general diffusion of knowledge among the whole people. Knowledge is not only essential to the prosperity of a free government, but absolutely necessary to its existence; it is at once the vital principle and the sustaining power.

The experience of the past has told us, that wherever there has been mental and moral light, there has been liberty; and wherever the people were ignorant, there was slavery. Since this is so, ignorance, which might be a misfortune in another country, is a crime in this; especially, since the means of knowledge are within the reach of every individual. In this republic, the intelligence of each individual is the depository and defence of his liberty.

The free institutions of the United States are not secured by armies, revenues, or constitutions; but by universal education. The education of the people

stands in the place of armies, bulwarks, and a throne. Knowledge and virtue are not only power and happiness, but they are "*Liberty.*"

In the first place, knowledge is necessary *to perceive the nature and value of literary and civil institutions.* The half-educated may know enough to desire these, but not enough to respect and sustain them. The illiterate cannot see the nature and object of literary institutions, which are to liberate the mind, and raise the intellectual and moral condition of a nation—to increase the necessities, and furnish the elegancies of life; and to let man feel and know the greatness of his nature.

This can be known by those only, who have felt the power, and tasted the pleasures of knowledge; and such institutions can be established and sustained by those only who can estimate their exalting influence. The nature and value of civil institutions, the educated will much better understand and honour.

A high degree of knowledge is requisite to see the nature and necessity of civil government. Man's weakness makes society desirable, and his wickedness makes government necessary. This government he supports to protect his life, his property, and his natural rights. The great object of government is to preserve order and distribute justice. The intelligent can estimate the value of such a public check and judge; for they can see the consequences of the selfishness and maliciousness of men.

Men, living in a civil government, have natural and civil rights; and knowledge becomes necessary *that they may know when justice is administered.*

And, in the first place, men should know what their rights are; how many of them they have surrendered up to the general government, that they may enjoy its protection and the advantages of society; and what rights they have retained, and of which nothing should deprive them.



Having learned their rights, they should know whether or not they were respected by their rulers. When there is fraud and injustice on the part of those who govern, the governed should be intelligent enough to know it, and able to defend themselves. The natural love of power, and the extreme selfishness of man, should excite him for preparation to judge of those who are in office, and have the opportunity of gratifying these oppressive principles.

Respect and obedience are due to those in office, for they are the guardians and ministers of that government which has been established for the promotion of human happiness. But corrupt rulers may forfeit their claims by personal wickedness and public injustice; and if this should take place, the public should be able to perceive it, and stop the abuses before their liberties are in danger.

On the other hand, the half-educated know not when their government is well administered. They are discontented and clamorous when they have their rights, and all the blessings of a well-ordered administration. They know not the value of the privileges they enjoy, and are always ready for a change in their rulers. They see not the excellences of their civil institutions, and do not feel respect enough for them to preserve them.

In a government where the people not only make the laws, but select those who are to administer them, there is the most imperious necessity for high intelligence and moral worth in every individual. The people should well understand their government, and be qualified to know that it is ably and justly administered; or whether it is not made the instrument of gratifying the ambition of the few, and of destroying the rights and of oppressing the many.

The people should be educated to know whether or not they are restrained by any law which does not conduce to the greatest private and general good.

The people may see evils, but they ought to be able to take that general view of the whole which would show them advantages (if there were such) which more than overbalance these evils.

In this government, justice is very often administered by a jury: and as this jury is taken from among the people, all should prepare themselves for being called upon to apply the law, and judge of the rights of their fellow-men. In the inferior courts of justice, the people are the judicial as well as the legislative part of the government. These important offices demand intelligence in every citizen. When those who are to be chosen for jurors are known to be ignorant or corrupt, dishonest individuals will claim the rights of others, and hope, through the known imperfection of the jury, to obtain those unjust demands which they are certain that right and the law would deny them.

Thus, the ignorance of men may be the loss of their rights, when they themselves are to be judges. It is desirable, too, that there should be general intelligence to ensure uniformity in jury decisions; for nothing excites a spirit of litigation more than uncertainty. When men differ, they should see the certainty of the decisions of the law. Again, the laws were made to keep men honest. If they are disposed not to be so, the law may compel them.

It hence becomes necessary to know when we should ask assistance from the laws, or, in other words, when litigation is necessary and justifiable. To judge correctly in this, we must know what our rights are, and how far the law may assist us in securing them; and this presupposes general information, obtained only by much study and reading; but which all may get if they will avail themselves of all the means of knowledge which may be obtained

Knowledge is necessary, to see the *effect of crime*,

*and the justice of punishment.* The natural and certain effect of crime, if it is not prevented, is to subvert human government, and to destroy the peace and happiness of society. Men live together, because society increases their comforts, but the effect of crimes would soon prevent all these advantages, and make a solitary life preferable to a social one.

The full extent of the injury of crimes is seldom seen, especially by the illiterate and unthinking class. The particular injury may be seen or felt ; but the general injury, the effect particular crimes have upon the whole community, is not so readily seen. The general effect, however, often becomes the greatest injury, and men should be able to trace the destructive influence of crime through all its relations.

The mischiefs of perjury in all their bearings are seen but by few. Men are obliged to put trust in each other's testimony ; all judicial redresses proceed on the belief that men will tell the truth. Consequently, a man that speaks falsely may deprive an honest man of his property, his reputation, and his life.

A false witness may do this great wickedness and not be discovered ; thus it is evident that perjury would cause the greatest injustice and cruelty in adjusting the affairs of men, or bring such distrust in what men said, that we should be unable to know the truth of any thing we did not see. When we reflect on all of these mischiefs, we shall see something of the extent of the injury which is produced by one of the crimes that men have to meet with in society.

Let the crime of taking what does not belong to us be considered a moment. The effect of this is, to take away all security of property. If this was done, men would secure nothing more than the present enjoyment. The future would be unprovided

for; provision for private and public conveniences would not be made; nor would there be any thing laid by for the wants of sickness and decrepit age; for there would be no certainty that we should retain it.

Thus the effect of stealing would be to turn a civilized state into a savage life. The whole effect of these two crimes we have mentioned, and the effect of all the crimes which are committed, should be seen by every citizen who values the blessings of society. Men are often treated with respect who are known to be guilty of injustice; but if men would see the bad influence of the example of such, and all the evils of their crimes, they would not be so civil to the enemy of their peace and prosperity.

When the nature of crime is understood, the necessity and justice of adequate punishment will be acknowledged. The end of punishment should be the reformation of the offender; and by his example to deter others from doing evil. The security of life, and the enjoyment of every blessing it contains, are protected chiefly by the fear of punishment. The intelligent know this, and will be just to themselves and to others, but the ignorant are apt to sink the crime (not seeing its destructive nature, and the extent of its effect) in commiserating the criminal,—to think the punishment too severe for the individual offence.

Knowledge is essential to see the *agreement between civil and revealed law*. Every man in society is under laws which command his obedience. As a rational creature, he should know whether or not these laws are just and right. The object of civil law is to prevent what is wrong, and to command what is right; and if a man has intelligence enough to know what is right and what is wrong, from the nature of his being, and the relations which he has to society and to government, he will know

whether the laws are perfect or defective, just or unjust.

The Creator has given man such a nature, and placed him in such relations to the beings and objects on the earth, that certain actions promote his happiness, and certain others his unhappiness. Human law, then, should command such actions, and no others, as promote human happiness; that is, human laws should be based on divine laws.

Knowledge is necessary, likewise, to see the *necessity of obeying the laws*. Obedience to the laws of our country (if they are just, and wise, and well administered, and all should know whether they are or not) is an obligation which every one is under. All claim the protection of these laws, and all should obey and honour them.

They were made for the peace and happiness of society and the prosperity of the people, and he who violates them must be an enemy to the welfare of his fellow-men. The fact that men do not always obey the laws, produces much anxiety, and distress, and unnecessary labour. This want of obedience occasions a great share of the disgrace and suffering which men endure. All should see that, in the end, a full obedience to the laws and rulers of the land would bring the greatest amount of happiness.

We should also regulate our wants and claims to the wants and claims of others. This the ignorant will not do, for they know not what are their lawful wants and just claims. The avaricious man disregards the rights of others, and does not regulate his desires of getting to his present, and what he has reason to believe will be his future wants. By this means he makes himself unhappy, and his fellow-beings miserable. We should know that all are by nature equal; that is, that all who are honest and industrious have equal claims to all the blessings which are offered in their condition and circum-

stances. And knowing what is right, it should be our desire and effort to do it.

Knowledge is necessary to see the *wants of society for professional men*, such as ministers, lawyers, and physicians. The ignorant are prone to imagine that these men live at their leisure, and on the produce of the labouring classes. They suppose them drones in society, who consume the best of the good things of life without producing any thing; and that mankind would be much better off if the professional classes were unknown.

The illiterate see not that men are ignorant and wicked, and that they need some one to make them wiser and better; that the flesh is heir to ills which require the most skilful treatment; and that the advantages which men try to take of each other require laws, and men to explain and apply them. They see not that their souls, health, and reputation are worth more than silver or gold. It is true that some professional men are indolent and dishonest; so, likewise, are some from the labouring classes.

The fact that there are such men, makes a greater necessity for general intelligence, that no one may be imposed upon. If there are men who are disposed to make a bad use of their superior privileges and education, others should know enough to prevent them. The intelligent will perceive that the peace and happiness of society require skilful physicians, honest lawyers, and faithful divines; and, seeing this, they will feel disposed to give such that reward and respect which their merit claims.

At the present day, how great is the demand for knowledge, that men may not *be deceived by the errors of the press*. The papers and periodicals which flood the land in almost every form, are frequently striving to make the "worse appear the better reason," and the rogue the better man. Their

intention, very often, is to deceive, and cause the people to believe a lie.

O how much discrimination, how much general information, and how much strength of mind does it require, to sift out the little truth that is infused into so much falsehood ! Who can know what to believe unless he possesses a cultivated mind to perceive internal evidence, or the natural probabilities of the thing represented. The parties make their leader, their favourite, a perfect man ; and the leader of an opposing party one that wants every thing that an honest man should have, and possessing all those qualities of which an honest man should not have one.

The constituents cannot be personally acquainted with the candidates, and of course must obtain their knowledge of them through the press. But there is, in almost every case, too fair a representation by friends, and far too foul a one by enemies ; and how shall the people be preserved from deception ? In no other way but by becoming intelligent, and by judging for themselves ; by knowing something of the history of the candidate ; by comparing, from time to time, the statements that are made of him, both by his friends and enemies ; and by searching into the motives of men when they speak and act.

An intelligent man will seldom be deceived. But the ignorant, who are obliged to think as others have thought for them, will always be liable to error and imposition. Where there is a free press, the people must be intelligent, or it will give power to the few, to take away the liberties of the many. In many parts of the country, the press is the sole agent in the formation and publication of opinion ; and so long as there is corruption in it, there is fear that it will be a strong engine of evil. This will certainly be its influence, unless the people are in-

telligent enough to detect its errors, and virtuous enough to be untouched by its corruption.

"It would be easy to show," says Dr. Caldwell, "that under the government of the United States, a very limited amount of school-learning, diffused among the people, is calculated, politically speaking, to injure, rather than to benefit them. I allude to that degree of attainment, which qualifies them merely to read newspapers, and to understand the meaning of what they contain, without enabling them to judge of its soundness.

"A people only thus far instructed, are in the fittest of all conditions to be imposed on and misled by artful demagogues and dishonest presses. When party spirit runs high, and the political passions become inflamed, they are induced, by intriguing men, to read papers only on one side of the question. The consequence is plain.

"Not being able to judge of the truth of the matter laid before them, as respects either the fitness of men, or the tendencies of measures, they are liable to be seduced into the most ruinous courses. Were they unable to read at all, or did they never see a newspaper, their condition would be less dangerous.

"Demagogues would have less power to delude and injure them. In the present state of our country, it is emphatically true, as relates to the great body of the people, that, 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.' The only remedy for the evil consists in *the reformation of the public presses, or, the diffusion of more learning, knowledge, and virtue among the people.*

"The former, it is to be apprehended, is not soon to be looked for. On the latter alone, therefore, rest the fate of our government and the hope of our country. Let the community at large be taught to think correctly and feel soundly, and they will not only have a secure protection against the falsehood



and corruption of the presses; those sources of mischief will cease to be encouraged.

“They must then choose between *reformation* and *extinction*. At the present moment, some of our public presses are the arch-engines of evil to our country, and a disgrace to the human character.”\* I consider entire ignorance as more dangerous than partial knowledge.

And lastly, men should know who are the conscientious and enlightened friends and supporters of our free institutions. It is obvious to all, that many are seeking places of power, not for the people’s good, but for their own. It is likewise as true, that many have the appearance of honesty and patriotism who possess neither of these necessary qualities in a public candidate.

How then shall the people judge who are worthy of their support and their country’s honours? How shall they be able to discriminate between the man of worth and capability, and the man who is a zealous pretender, but who will, either by his wickedness or weakness, betray his constituents? How shall the people know who are the guardians of the laws and constitution, and the faithful advocates of their rights? How shall the people know who to intrust with their property and their liberties? To all these questions we answer, “*by being intelligent.*”

\* A Discourse on the Advantages of a National University, especially in its Influence on the Union of the United States; delivered September 25, 1832. By Charles Caldwell, M. D.

## SECTION IV.

## DUTIES WHICH WE OWE TO EACH OTHER.

“MAN loves to commune with his fellow men ; and he is led by an instinctive natural desire to associate with his species. Society, with him, is to be the source of all the love which he feels, of all the love which he excites, and therefore, of almost all the desires and enjoyments which he is capable of feeling. The boy hastens to meet his playmates, and *man* to communicate his thoughts to *man*. ‘Were I in a desert,’ says an eloquent author, ‘I would find out where within it to call forth my affections.

“‘If I could do no better, I would fasten them on some sweet myrtle, or seek some melancholy cypress to connect myself to ; I would court their shade, and greet them kindly for their protection. I would cut my name upon them, and say they were the loveliest trees throughout the desert. If their leaves withered, I would teach myself to mourn ; and when they rejoiced, I would rejoice along with them.’ The heart cannot live alone ; to love and be beloved is the first natural desire of all.

“To society, man owes the strength, the perfection, and the happiness of his nature. In society are developed all those noble faculties which place man at the head of creation ; which makes him at once the head, the heart, and the tongue of all. Says Seneca, the great Roman moralist : ‘Make us single and solitary, and what are we ? The prey of other animals, and their victim—the prey which would be most easy for them to seize, the victim which would be most easy for them to destroy. Those

other animals have, in their own strength, sufficient protection. If they be born to live apart, each has its separate arms to defend it.'

"Man has no tusks or talons to make *him* terrible. He is weak and naked; but weak and naked as he is, society surrounds him and protects him. It is this which submits to his power all other living things, and not the earth merely, which seems in some measure his own by birth, but the very ocean, that is to him another world of beings of a different nature. Society averts from him the attack of diseases—it mitigates his suffering when he is assailed by them—it gives support and happiness to his old age—it makes him strong in the great combat of human life, because it leaves him not alone to struggle with his fortune."\*

But however great and numerous the blessings of society may be, the social union does not take its rise from views of self-interest; it forms, from the constitution of human nature, a necessary condition of man. It is not the wants and necessities of his animal being which *create* his social feelings; for he is determined to society by his very nature, by instinct, and by innumerable principles which have a reference to his fellow-creatures. Man must have the sympathy of man; he always wishes to infuse his thoughts and feelings into the minds and hearts of others, and to share the thoughts and feelings of those other minds and hearts.

There is scarcely a moment of our existence in which the social affection does not influence our hopes and our fears, our resolutions for the future, and our remembrance of the past. On the society of his fellow-beings, man, as his Creator has made him, is ever ready to pour out the affections of his heart; to society he is ever ready to give the

\* Dr. Brown.

strength of his arm, and the light of his mind; and to society he always flees for sympathy in his sufferings, companionship in his rejoicings, and aid in his necessities. Thus, the all-wise Creator has made the gratification of this social affection the great benefactor and protector of man.

The God of nature, who has made it delightful for man to associate with his fellow men, and his happiness to be active in this association, has likewise directed him *how* to act amid those innumerable and responsible relations which he sees between him and the fellow-beings around him. These directions or laws from the Creator have made human life (when it is worthy of that name) to consist in the exercise of *duties*. He who *lives* best, discharges these duties *best*. And as it is necessary for all of us to be frequently reminded of our duties, I shall now state a few of those which men owe to each other in society.

And first, some of the duties which come under the general name of Justice. "The word justice denoting that disposition which leads us, in cases where our own temper, or passions, or interests are concerned, to judge and to act without being biassed by partial considerations."\*

"We should be just towards the *property* of others. This implies honesty in all our dealings with men. It is right that we should have a proper regard for our own interest; but in promoting it, we should never interfere with the interests and rights of others. Security of property is the great incentive to industry, and the original cause of wealth. He who would take what belongs to another, does all that he can do towards destroying the rich and populous earth which we behold, and in banishing the intellectual sciences, and arts, and

\* Dugald Stewart.

systems of civil and moral polity, which distinguish the civilized man from the savage.

"The certainty that we shall enjoy the fruits of our own labours, is the first cause which operates as the civilizer of man; and he, who, like the robber, would appropriate to himself the property of others, is doing all that his hand and heart can do in sending man back to the condition, the life, and sufferings of the savage.

"If there was not respect to the property of others, there would be no wealth to support, and no industry to be supported; no bounty to cheer, and no penury to be relieved; but there would be one general penury, and one common struggle for that scanty morsel which would alone remain for the wretched."\* We should not only abstain from wresting or injuring the possessions of others, but we should not interfere with the lawful means which others may use for the acquisition of property. Justice towards the property of others, and their lawful means of acquiring it, then, I repeat, is what we all owe to each other.

Justice demands that we should not interfere with the *freedom of others' actions*. This constitutes personal liberty. In civil communities, this right may be restricted when a man uses his freedom to the injury of others. But freedom of acting should not be restrained by unjust laws or oppressive institutions. We should not prevent the free actions of others by haughtiness, bribery, or lordly command, but should leave every man to act according to his own native dignity and free choice, so long as his actions do not clash with the private and public good.

Justice makes us *respect the character or reputation* of others.

\* Dr. Brown.

“Good name in man and woman  
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.

But he that filches from me my good name,  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
Yet makes me poor indeed.”

To take away a man's character or reputation is to take away his life : it is the foulest, blackest kind of murder. Man possesses no treasure so pure, so dear, so valuable as a spotless reputation ; and he who would trifle with this is man's greatest foe. Evil-speaking is very natural and very easy to the wicked heart ; and the communications in this world give a very free and a very rapid circulation to evil reports. But he who would indulge this wicked propensity, or circulate an evil report, does to his fellow-men the greatest injustice, and the worst of all possible injuries. There is nothing in our fellow-men that we should respect with so much sacredness as their good name. We should avoid every thing that would be injurious to their character. All insinuations which might give rise to suspicion or prejudice, and every thing that would prevent the praise or credit which is justly due to them. And where the individual cannot defend himself, we should counteract every thing that would be to his injury.

Justice requires us *to exercise fairness in forming our opinion* of others. There is much less criminal intention in the world than is commonly supposed ; and it is our duty to estimate the conduct and motives of others with calmness and impartiality. We should make full allowance for the circumstances and feelings of others. We should not be willing to ascribe bad motives to men, nor to condemn them before they are proved to be dishonest. It is natural to ascribe good motives to *our* bad actions, and bad motives to the good actions of *others*. We should

guard against this selfish principle, and this want of fairness and liberality to our fellow-men. We should always form good opinions of men, until their actions compel us to do otherwise.

It is unjust to form our opinions of men from imperfect acquaintance or partial considerations; yet men are very liable to do so. An opinion should not be formed or published until there is a full understanding of the person and the subject in question; yet so ready are men to relate whatever has been told to them; and so much readier are they to inquire what is *said* than what is *true*, that there is very apt to be a want of fairness in the examination of the truth of what is uttered. This disposition should make us cautious in receiving or circulating any thing which may injure others.

Justice is to be exercised *in judging of the statements* of others. "This constitutes candour. We are to give a candid, deliberate hearing to the opinions, arguments, and statements of others; estimating fairly and honestly their weight and influence. This state of mind is opposed to prejudicé, bigotry, self-love for our own opinion, attachment to preconceived opinions, and a narrow disputatious spirit."\*

In stating any thing, men are apt to take from, or add to, whatever they may have heard; to give it a different colouring, or a different appearance from what they know to be the true state of the case. Men are apt, likewise, to draw conclusions which do not follow from the facts and premises which they have judged from. To all this unfairness in judging of the statements of others, candour is directly opposed; and he who wishes to represent others as he would wish to be represented, will often examine himself to see if he has not something of this deceptive spirit.

\* Dr. Abercrombie.

Justice enjoins us *to respect the feelings and affections* of others. "We may do great injury to the feelings of others without hurting their interest or their reputation. There are minds of extreme delicacy, which we may deeply wound, either by roughness or grossness of manner, or by overbearing haughtiness and undue severity. Towards sensitive persons like these, we should behave with the utmost tenderness.

"We should never ruffle the tranquil mind, nor disturb that equanimity of temper so necessary to a clear perception of truth and the happiness of the individual. And he who robs one of the affections of another, is the greatest pilferer that moves above the earth. The affections of others are the most precious possessions which man can have; and if the guilt of the robber is in proportion to the evil he does, who is there so guilty, so base, as that man who steals not only the affections, but also the capacity of feeling affection and confidence again.

"He who would corrupt or lessen that remaining affection and love which men still have for each other, and which makes the earth still a paradise wherever they exist, does all that he can to equal the malignity and wickedness of the first great tempter of the human race."\*

Justice demands that we should be *impartial in estimating the talents* of others. Man is prone to detract from the reputation of others that he may advance his own. Perhaps there is no principle more deeply rooted in the human mind than the love of fame and distinction; and if this principle is properly regulated, there is no one more subservient to valuable purposes.

But it is the most difficult of all principles to restrain within the bounds of moderation. Our ambi-

\* Dr. Brown.



tion and self-partiality prevent us from attending to the merits of others, and we are blind or ill-disposed towards those talents and excellences which eclipse our own. Of this truth, he who will attend to the operations of his own mind will be fully satisfied.

How necessary is it, then, that we should guard against that envious spirit which would prevent us from appreciating and honouring the genius and abilities of others. We should always be ready to see beauties and applaud excellences, and to give the tribute of honour wherever honour is due.

Justice demands that we should *not injure the moral principles* of others. "He who would knowingly corrupt the virtue or the moral principles of another, either by specious argument, seduction, or vicious example, must possess a character of the deepest malignity. These offences come under no human law; the morality and good-will of man is the only restraint over them.

"And he who wilfully lessens a single virtue in the heart of another, or introduces into it a single vice, or increases the power of any guilty passion," is an enemy to the peace of society, the happiness of man, and the government of his Creator. To unhinge the moral principles of another, in any way whatever, is to do the worst deed which man does to his fellow-men. Yet how ready are some men to ridicule religion, to sneer at morality, and to mock at every religious expression and sentiment of the heart.

To such we would say, if you have no fear of human depravity unchecked, no fear of human ordinances, or no fear of the laws of God, yet we beseech you have some benevolence to your fellow-men. Do not use your wickedness and malice by leaguings with the arch-destroyer of man, in making the world

worse than it now is. Have some regard to the sensitive, immortal beings around you; and if you have made up your minds to become abandoned in principle and depraved in practice, we still entreat you not *to seek* to contaminate others.

“How guilty must be that writer, whose works have contributed to violate the principles of truth and rectitude; to pollute the imagination or corrupt the heart! Yet this destroyer of moral being often goes through the scene of destruction unmolested, perhaps honoured, as if no power could reach the measure of his guilt but the hand of the Eternal. There is another extensive species of corruption which arises from profligate example.

When the gray-headed veteran of debaucheries, having led a long life of unceasing excess in all that is gross and depraved, collects around him his band of youthful disciples, and relates to them the tales of merriment and obscenity, and watches the vicious passions which need to be strengthened, he presents an example the results of which no one can estimate. Surely, if there be a being on this earth whom we have permission to hate, with full and absolute detestation, it is a human demon like this. How circumspect should we be, that we may in no way whatever be the cause of injuring the moral principles of others!”\*

Another social duty which we owe to each other is that of *Veracity*. The happiness which we derive from intercourse with men, from the advancement and diffusion of knowledge, from the teachings of philosophy, and the experience of history, depends upon the fidelity and scrupulous accuracy with which we adhere to the natural, instinctive principle of veracity. Openness, sincerity, and truth not only promote our highest interest, but have an engaging,

\* Dr. Brown.

beautiful appéarance wherever they are found. Truth is the native suggestion of the heart, and is always uttered, unless there are solicitations to falsehood too strong for the natural principle.

Children always put implicit confidence in the statements of others, until experience teaches them the lesson of caution; and after all our lessons of equivocation, duplicity, and falsehood, there is more belief than veracity in the world. Although the existence and happiness of society depend upon the fidelity with which men ascertain and relate the truth, although there is so much that is pleasing and attractive in truth, and although it is the natural, spontaneous effusion of the heart, still there is so much insincerity, pride, ambition, and avarice in the heart of man, that he finds strong solicitations to depart from that fidelity of purpose, that scrupulous accuracy of statement which he knows is due to his fellow-citizens.

The duty of veracity should make men faithful and critical in *ascertaining facts*. There is so much credulity in man, that he is apt to believe without proper examination. (I except the subject of Christianity, for here the want of examination is the cause of unbelief.) In the affairs of life, we are disposed to draw general conclusions from a few particular facts, to judge of a whole body of men from a knowledge of a few individuals, and to pass ~~sentences~~ upon an individual from knowing some one of his opinions, or from hearing of a few facts in the history of his life.

There is too strong an inclination to generalize and jump to conclusions. This makes man impatient and unfaithful in his investigations, and superficial in his information. He cannot expect to tell the truth, if he has not correctly and fully informed himself. He cannot be a man of veracity, however

well disposed he may be, unless he is critical and faithful in his reception of facts.

We should, likewise, be scrupulous in *stating facts*. They may be stated correctly, and yet give a false impression. The truth may be told, and yet a part of it withheld. A fact may be stated without the circumstances under which it occurred. There are many ways of deceiving, either by looks, or voice, or gesture, or suppression, or high colouring, and yet, so far as respects the prominent facts in the case, there may be no departure from truth. Much watchfulness and sincerity will be necessary to give us an honest, scrupulous narration.

The third consideration in the love and practice of truth is *faithfulness in the fulfilment of promises*. This is opposed to actual departure from what was distinctly promised; likewise to all those encouragements which one may give another without the intention of meeting them. A straightforward integrity carefully and conscientiously performs every promise, and fulfils every engagement, although the performance or fulfilment is attended with a high sacrifice of feeling and interest.

I know of nothing that causes so much inconvenience and derangement in the business of life, that stops the exercise of so much benevolence, that makes truth and reality so powerless, as the departures which men make from strict veracity. Let us, then, in all our intercourse, be careful to fulfil this duty to each other.

“The duties which have been considered, may be termed *negative* duties, which cause us *to abstain* from the injury of others. Those which are yet to be considered, may be called *positive* duties, coming under the general term Benevolence. These consist in being *active* in doing good to our fellow-men.”\*

And how touching and eloquent are the pleadings of the wants and ills of man! Wherever men are found, there man sees and hears invitations to do good, the most tender and the most persuasive.

There is nothing that calls upon man's activity with so much justice, so much earnestness, and with such high, heavenly claims, as the destitute, diseased condition of man, and the susceptibility of his nature for increased happiness. The world is ignorant, and wants instruction—in doubt, and asks for counsel—it is sick, and wishes and needs health—hungry and naked, and asks for food and clothing. Wherever man meets man, there benevolence is asked and required.

It is our duty to administer to each other's *personal necessities*. The rich are dependent on the poor, and the poor upon the rich. Some have more than they want, and others want more than they have. There is bounty to relieve, and penury to be relieved—there is the exercise of generosity for some, and the exercise of gratitude for others. There are some who are “nobly maimed,” some are unfortunate, and others whose woes make men forget their vices: all these are brothers of the human family, and ask our benevolence for the necessities of man. These petitions should be heard, and if there is ability, cheerfully granted.

Our benevolence should be eager to relieve *personal suffering*. This we may do by erecting hospitals and asylums, by visiting and administering to the sick, and by sending to the disabled the comforts of life. Whenever a fellow-being is in pain or despondency, we should be disposed to relieve and to cheer. The supplications of the sick and the sorrowful should be heard and answered, as well as the invitations of the gay and the happy.

We should sympathize with the sufferer as well as rejoice with the prosperous. It is as much, or

more, our duty to relieve personal pain, as it is to add to personal pleasure. Benevolence can make the world much happier by supplying the wants of the necessitous, and relieving the sufferings of the distressed, than it can by giving comforts to the comfortable; yet the most of our benevolence is apt to expend itself in sympathy with those who would be happy without it.

Prosperity always owes a duty to adversity; the fortunate should regard the unfortunate; and the virtuous should pity the vicious. Benevolence should be the great moral link which binds man to man; and it should be our business to visit the lonely and the neglected, to comfort the distressed, and to counsel the weak and the wavering.

It is our duty to attend to the *education and instruction* of others. "The virtue of mankind, and the *knowledge* which invigorates that virtue and renders it more surely useful, are the greatest objects which benevolence can have in view."\* To instruct the ignorant in useful knowledge is to do the greatest good that man is privileged to confer.

There is no benevolence so exalted, so useful, so heavenly, as that which pours mental and moral light into the rational, immortal mind. To give the ignorant an education is the only way that we can give them the power of fulfilling the object of their being. This divine benevolence, all who have had an education are permitted and required to exercise.

We may instruct by founding and endowing literary institutions; by petitioning for or enacting laws which encourage a sound universal education; by instructing those who make teaching their profession; by ascertaining the amount and means of education among the *whole* people; by improving the condition of the schools, and by imparting useful information wherever we meet with *mind*.

\* Dr. Brown.

Man was put into society to love and enlighten man ; and when he does this duty, he feels a pleasure which is purer and higher than any other. To know our duty to ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to our Creator, is the duty of all ; and having known, it is our duty to give this knowledge to every human being.

It is our duty to make men *moral*. And to make them moral is not only to make them refrain from the grosser vices of men and to do their duty to their neighbours, but likewise to persuade them to love and obey their Creator. To raise the moral condition of man by instructing the ignorant, by rescuing the unwary, and by reclaiming the vicious, implies the highest species of useful benevolence.

But we cannot make *man* happy by giving him honours, possessions, or pleasures ; if we make *him* happy we must make him moral. And we cannot make men moral by merely making them polite and learned ; but we take the proper means to do this when we give them that Word which is truth, and which sanctifies men. Therefore, to improve the moral condition of men is to make them sober, enlightened Christians. Any thing short of this is but little else than a change from one vice to another. Our benevolence, then, in raising the moral condition of man, should be exercised in making him understand, believe, and practise the truths of the Bible.

A fixed, settled benevolence disposes us at all times to be *agreeable* to our fellow-men. "There are many who are not deficient in what we usually call deeds of benevolence, yet who are still very apt to forget that a most important exercise of true benevolence consists in the habitual cultivation and practice of courtesy, gentleness, and kindness ; and that these dispositions often increase the comforts

and happiness of others to a greater degree than any actual deeds of beneficence.”\*

This “benevolence in trifles” is something that we as a people do not yet very well understand; yet the greater part of the happiness of life consists in those little attentions, those “minor decencies” which cost us no trouble or money, but which we, from selfishness or sturdy independence, are very much disposed to overlook. To make others happy by conforming our feelings to theirs, by taking an interest in the worthy objects of their pursuit, and by entering into their plans and opinions, is a sympathy we all desire, and a benevolence we all owe. He that does this exercises no small virtue. To make ourselves agreeable by flattery, or by pampering vicious appetites, is detestable; it is to make ourselves wholly unworthy of esteem or friendship.

But to make ourselves agreeable by imparting innocent amusement or useful knowledge, by increasing the general happiness and good-will of the company, or by sharing the sorrows and sufferings of others, is a benevolent tribute which we all owe to those we meet with. Whenever we meet with our fellow-men, we should always desire, and do all in our power to make them happier and better.

And, lastly, in all our intercourse with men we should endeavour to *make peace*. This becomes, in a world that is quick to take offence and slow to forgive it, a very important duty. To be a peace-maker where there are constant provocations and systematic injustice, met as constantly by unrelenting resentment and revenge, is one of the most honourable, charitable, and heavenly capacities that men can ever act in.

He who allays strife, calms the passionate, and soothes excitement, is, indeed, a welcome and a

\* Dugald Stewart.



blessed mediator between man and man. As we have already said, there is much less criminal intention in the world than is generally imagined—the most of the differences among men arising from misunderstanding and misrepresentation; and hence it becomes us to put the best possible construction upon the actions of others, and not to judge hastily or report unfavourably.

We should discountenance all insinuations, and strive to make the parties better understood by each other. We should avoid every thing that would injure the feelings or the friendship of others. We should endeavour to destroy prejudice, abate animosity, and to establish a friendly, social intercourse among all men.

He who adds one emotion of love more to the world, or takes away from it one of hatred, is a benefactor to man. He who makes friendship where there was enmity, kindness where there was a disposition to injure, and gratitude where there was suspicion, may truly be said “to go about doing good.” “Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.”

## SECTION V.

### PATRIOTIC DUTIES TO OUR COUNTRY.

“IN an extensive and populous country, the instinctive affection of patriotism is apt to grow languid among the mass of the people, and therefore it becomes the more necessary to impress on their minds *those considerations of reason and duty*

which recommend public spirit as one of the principal branches of morality.”\*

There is a foundation laid in nature for distinct communities. Mountains, oceans, and continents create natural divisions; and the diversity of languages, customs, manners, and products unite with these natural divisions to separate tribes and nations from each other. These causes always separate men during the earlier ages of society, but their effect becomes less and less as society advances, and reason improves.

The prejudices which arise among different nations, from arbitrary signs and ceremonies, may be necessary, during the infancy of reason, to maintain order, and to form the people into united governments. But when the mind becomes more mature, and can look beyond the sign and the ceremony, these barriers of affection and free intercourse are seen to be but useless trifles, and will gradually disappear.

The strong tendency of reason and affection to unite every people and nation, shows us that the principles of disunion (for patriotism implies a separation) are not malign and original in the human heart. While we love the land of our birth, and defend the government that protects us, we may still wish the prosperity of every other land, and the perfection\* of every other government. Duties to our countrymen, and to the laws of our country, do not imply ill-will to others.

“Men may be enthusiastic, and even selfish; in loving their country. To love the land of our fathers, and the land of our birth, is natural to all, and the duty of all. To love and venerate the great names and the great deeds recorded in the history of our country, is a patriotic duty which every American youth rejoices to perform. In loving

\* Dugald Stewart.

our country, we love every individual in it, for each is a part of the one great whole.

"The heart feels an affection for those who tread the same soil, who breathe the same air, and rejoice in the same freedom. We feel united by the closest ties to those who lend vigour to the same institutions, who with us have one common interest and one common enemy."\* Interests and relations like these unite the hands and hearts of American youth with ties too strong for ambition or rivalry to break asunder. Affection is the great accompaniment of duty: and when affection is so strong and so universal, there must be duties of no slight obligation.

"*Our first patriotic duty is the duty of obedience.* Obedience to the government under which we live, does not become a duty, merely because that government exists, or has long existed, but because mankind—at least that large part of mankind, which we term our country—would suffer, upon the whole, if we were not to obey."\* This gives authority to any government to claim the obedience of every citizen.

"He who is wise enough to consult for the public weal, and good enough to wish it, will never hazard a revolution because a few abuses exist, and a faint hope appears of correcting them. Though we may see imperfections in the government, which tend to lessen our happiness and respectability, we should yet be forbearing, and reflect on the happy influence of diffusive knowledge, and upon the little that is to be hoped from the exercise of force.

"We should weigh the good with the good, and the evil with the evil, before we lift the voice against the government that protects us. 'The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance to begin, is,' as Mr. Burke truly says,

\* Dr. Brown.

‘faint, obscure, and not easily definable. Government must be abused and deranged, indeed, before it can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer in extremities, this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state.

“Times, and occasions, and provocations, will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case—the irritable from sensibility to oppression—the highminded, from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands—the brave and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause; *but with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.*”

In these free independent states, the people do not believe in the “divine right to govern.” We recognise no other principle which gives moral authority, than that which bestows the greatest possible amount of happiness, the longest period of time, on the greatest possible number of people; and this principle is self-government, with equal rights and privileges to all mankind. “The divine right to govern wrong,” cannot be a right derived from the *Divinity*. The God, who is the God of happiness, of truth, and virtue, would not, surely, authorize any man to make His creatures miserable. The origin of power and the authority of civil law can arise from no other source than from the free, full consent of those who make the laws which they are to obey. We do not believe that “law is a rule of action proceeding from a superior to an inferior,” *but a rule of action prescribed by that whole people who are to obey the law.* As the people cannot be superior to themselves, our laws cannot

come from a superior to an inferior. Such is the authority which rests in the laws of the United States.

The constitution and the laws of this government have emanated *from the people*. They have not only made the laws, but have promised to obey them; and thus have given the strongest authority which laws can possibly have. ♦ Unjust laws and tyrannical institutions, imposed by despots, may have no claim on the people's obedience; but laws, which the people have made, and in making, promised to obey; which recognise equal rights and privileges to all, which derive their authority from the consent of those who are to obey, and from that which is right and just within itself, must possess the highest claims to implicit, universal obedience; and such is the obedience which every citizen of these United States owes to this republican government.

We present the only example of a convention of the people, antecedent to the existence of their government. The *people* assembled and elected representatives to this convention, for the avowed purpose of framing a new constitution. This deputation *from the people* deliberated and resolved upon a form of government. The people adopted the government they had framed, and thus gave it its moral authority. Obedience to the constitution and laws of the United States is therefore a patriotic and a moral duty; and every member of this commonwealth is under a legal and a moral obligation to obey his government.

*It is our duty to respect those who have been elected to civil offices.* The want of proper respect for those who enact and administer the laws, begets a want of respect for the law itself; and if it is not respected, there had better be no law. While every government must necessarily partake very much

of the character of those who administer it, it likewise will receive the same love and respect which the people give to its officers. In the United States, the people are liable to withhold the proper regard which they should have for their civil officers. These men are taken from among the people. Before they were elected to office, they received no more respect than any other fellow-citizen; and as they were formerly considered and estimated by the people, they are likely to be regarded while intrusted with their office. But this should not be so; the sacredness and majesty of the law give its officers a claim to our respect; and every man who understands and reverences his government, will transfer his respect to those who guard and administer it.

The universal practice of defaming candidates for office will have a tendency to make us have less respect for those who are elected. We should guard against this influence by discriminating between the true character, and that which is given by party spirit, and by estimating the successful candidate in connexion with the duties and sanctity of the office. In politics, the majority govern; and he who has the majority should, while in office, have the respect of all. Obedience to the laws and respect to civil officers, are the first patriotic duties of every citizen.

The third duty which I shall mention is, *we should defend the laws and constitution of our country.* The duty of *defending* the land which we love, may be implied in the love we bear to it. But when our fathers, by their "valour and their blood," gave us a free government, they asked our virtue and our patriotism to defend it. When we received this glorious boon, we promised to defend it: and when aggression would corrupt or destroy this consecrated temple of freedom, it is a duty which we

owe to our fathers and ourselves to defend it with our persons, our property, and our lives.

“To think of the invader of our land and our rights, is to feel the duty of opposition. If we hear that the foot of an enemy has pressed our soil with an enemy’s purpose, we think of our excellent frame of laws which will be broken down; of the wild disorder and desolation that will spread over the land; of the miseries of blood and rapine which invasion will produce; and of the deeper miseries of slavery and oppression which conquest will bring; these thoughts, together with the love we bear to our countrymen and our kindred, will rouse every spirit, and nerve every arm, and the invader must retreat or perish.”\*

We may be assailed by the calumnies of rival nations, but our defence in this case should be to live in such a manner that will prove their assertions false. By wincing or retorting, we will give importance to that which, originally, had no claim to our notice. Whatever personal pique or national jealousy may think or write about us, let it be our constant aim to present to all, the spectacle of a free, intelligent, highminded people. Let the virtue, the liberty, and the prosperity of our country defend the wisdom of its people, its laws, and its constitution.

“The citizen, then, is to *obey* the laws and to *defend* them. These two duties relate to the political system that *exists*. He has still one other great duty, which relates not to things as they *are*, but to things as they *may be*. He is not to preserve the present system only; he is to endeavour, if it require or admit of improvement of any sort, to render it still more extensively useful to those who live under it, and still more worthy of the admira-

\* Dr. Brown.

tion of the world than, with all its excellence, it yet may be.

“It is the duty of every citizen to increase, to the best of his power, the means of public happiness in the nation: this he should do by every aid which he can give to its external or internal resources; and especially, as the most important of all ends, by every improvement which it would be prudent to attempt, of any existing evils, *in its laws and general forms of polity.*”\*

The citizen, then, is not only to admire the laws, but he is, to the best of his ability, *to improve them*. Every thing human is more or less imperfect, and, therefore, will always admit of amendment. And he who thoroughly understands his government, and *sincerely* loves it, will, even in the best of governments, see many deficiencies to be supplied, and many faults to be corrected. It is the affectionate, faithful duty of every member of this commonwealth to detect and expose the errors of a government, which the highest wisdom and experience have endeavoured to perfect.

It is not true patriotism that would keep defects out of sight; nor is he a true patriot who can see nothing to be improved. But while we are performing the important duty of closely searching for the evils that exist, we should at the same time remember that it is *very easy to declaim against abuses*. To find fault with every thing, and at any time, is never difficult. Some do it that they may make a show of superiority; and others to gratify a cynical disposition. It seems as if some were glad to find a fault, that they may have a chance to round a few periods of abusive eloquence. Such declaimers should be treated with contempt.

But he who, out of love to his country and to his

\* Dr. Brown.



fellow-men, presents a deficiency or a defect, should have a candid, respectful hearing. No one who *loves the general good*, will decry against men or measures, merely to gratify his own selfish feelings ; but such a man must publish wrongs and point out evils. He does it because the happiness of man is dearer to him than the respect of *blind* admirers of their country.

But, however honest we may be in our efforts to reform, we should always act cautiously : and where there is not experience to consult, and a difference of opinion, we should mistrust our judgments. Sudden changes and rash innovations are always to be feared. Blind zeal and hasty measures we all have a right to suspect. The true patriot, then, will exercise a proper respect for the laws and institutions that *are*, and will attentively consider the evils of a change, and of the chances for and against him of making the proposed alteration an extensive, permanent amendment.

Men are apt to make changes under the name of reform, because they see obstacles to their ambition or avarice. We are very liable to be deceived here. What we *wish* to be so, we easily believe *ought* to be so. When a statesman contemplates a change, and sees that it will greatly improve his own interest, it is not very difficult to omit the consideration of the nation's good. At least, arguments for the latter will not occur so readily as arguments for the former. We need to watch ourselves, therefore, when we would recommend a new law, or an alteration in the existing one. When we act for the public, let us see that the *public good* is our motive.

We may fulfil the duty of augmenting the general happiness of our country *by increasing its products*. He is a benefactor to his country who improves the art of cultivating the soil ; who invents, or brings into general notice useful instruments of

husbandry ; who brings to greater perfection the different varieties of grain, and makes known their most congenial soil and climate. He who makes two blades of grass grow where but one has been raised, increases the means of his country's happiness.

He who gives his leisure moments to the science of mineralogy, and by this means discovers a mine of coal or metallic ore, opens to his country a source of labour and of wealth ; and they who invent machinery for manufacturing the minerals of the earth, and the products of the soil, are justly counted benefactors of their nation. As the products of a nation are the wages of a people, he who increases the amount of labour by machinery or skill, so as to increase the products, will, in the same proportion, increase the wealth of the people. A mechanic may bless his country by improving his tools, his machinery, and the article he manufactures.

A farmer may do a national good by improving the breed of cattle, and of all kinds of stock, and by enriching the soil he cultivates. To make this increase and improvement in the products of the land, is the duty, as far as he is able, of every citizen. The nation gives him protection and encouragement that he may do so ; and in his allegiance he promises to do his duty and seek his country's greatest good.

We may increase the happiness of our people *by opening new markets for our products*. We have some wants which we cannot supply, and others for which we have more than a supply. By exchanging equal values with other nations, the surplus of our products are given for those which we could not supply ourselves ; or else the surplus is exchanged for money, which, having a common value, may be given for any required necessary of life.

Now, he who opens a new market where the raw materials and manufactures which remain after our

wants are supplied, may be exchanged for money or the necessaries of life, has increased the labour and the wealth of his country. We may open new markets at home by increasing the consumption with new manufactories. By these noble, national enterprises, every citizen may be a patron and a blessing of his country; and a man is obligated to do not only what is right, but *all that he can do*.

We may increase our country's strength and wealth *by facilitating the intercourse between districts*. The projection and execution of canals and rail-roads, making rivers navigable, and opening highways between important locations, increases the value of the lands, and unites the strength of a nation. The prosperity of a country depends as much upon the rapidity and cheapness of its inland conveyance, as it does upon its good soil and safe harbours.

When the transportation is cheap and regular, remote districts enjoy the advantages of home and foreign markets; by this means they are placed by the side of seaport towns. To facilitate intercourse where the lands are as distant as they are in the United States, is a very important duty, and one that every citizen owes to the prosperity of his country.

Another benevolent and patriotic duty of citizens *is the establishment of institutions of charity and instruction*. Institutions like these are the fairest ornaments of the land, and the founder of them is entitled to the lasting gratitude of nations. In the United States, the literary institutions are the sources and the depositories of liberty; and the charitable institutions of this republic—the asylum of a world—are the resting places and the home of the destitute and the helpless of every nation.

He who founds a school of instruction, establishes the liberty of his country; and he who educates

the people, makes them free. Those who have enlightened mankind, and diffused useful knowledge through the whole mass of the people, have been the greatest philanthropists of their race, for I know of no benevolence so exalted as that which pours light and truth into the immortal mind.

He who wishes his country to take a high standing among the nations of the earth ; he who wishes for the growing improvement and prosperity of his countrymen ; and he who wishes the perpetuity of this glorious example of liberty and self-government, will desire to do all in his power to educate the *people*. We may serve our country by defending her constitution, by fighting her battles, and by contributing to her revenues ; but never do we serve her so nobly and so effectually as we do when we *educate her people*.

The enlightened man makes the laws his slaves under him ; but the ignorant man is a slave under the laws. Intelligent men and freemen are always synonymous ;—they always have and always will signify the same thing. Then, let those who would serve their country in the highest and noblest capacity which they can have, see that the education and the literature of their country is supported and encouraged.

*It is the duty of citizens to be able and disposed to correct the errors which exist in the systems of government.* Experience, where there is proper observation and reflection, is a constant teacher. That which appeared wise in theory yesterday, may, by trying its application, appear inexpedient in practice to-morrow.

The law that looked just and benevolent in the abstract, may, when meeting with the relations of other laws, be found unsuitable in practice ; and laws which have received the approval of those who obey, may, under a change of circumstances, be

found oppressive. It is the duty, therefore, of citizens to correct the errors which ignorance, or inexperience, or change of circumstances have occasioned.

As long as the machinery of government is a human construction, there will be errors in it, and it is the duty of men to watch the effect of experience, and detect that which may be pernicious, and succour that which is found beneficial. By this means we may do much to augment the general happiness. He who exposes a bad law, and proposes a good one in its stead, presents a valuable offering to society. A wise law may do more good to a nation than all its individual benevolence. It may prevent evils and confer blessings which will place its author among the benefactors of his age.

Citizens may increase the general happiness of their country, *by adapting their form of government to the condition and character of the people.* Man is a mutable being. Our motives, purposes, objects of affection, and views of life, are the subjects of a continued change. The principle of mutation runs not only through the life of each individual, but through the whole spirit and genius of nations. What was applauded and revered yesterday, is despised to-day.

Such is the fluctuation of feeling, and the transitoriness of opinion. Now, that is the best government which is best adapted to the feelings, education, and circumstances of its subjects. When the people become different, their government should become different. The influence of the laws should be such as to assist a good change, or check a bad one. And as the people are constantly varying, the laws will require a corresponding modification.

He who sees these mutations in the people, and the influence of the existing government, will know whether they are adapted to each other or not: and if he perceives an unsuitableness in the one to the

other, he will confer a blessing on the nation by making the incongruity known.

And, lastly, we may augment the general happiness of our country, *by making ourselves virtuous and intelligent.* To perform this duty, is to prepare ourselves for every other one ; and every citizen of a free government is under a legal and a moral obligation to become intelligent enough to make his laws, and virtuous enough to obey them.

In this country, knowledge is brought to the door of every man ; means of useful information may be used by all, for every encouragement is given to our citizens that they may "inform the head and improve the heart." To improve ourselves that we may enlighten others, and to lead a moral and a religious life that we may be a good example to others, is a duty which every man owes to his fellow-men ; but how emphatically is it the duty of *freemen!*

We do not give our country liberty by giving it just and equal laws, but by giving it intellectual and religious instruction ; neither do we give our country greatness and happiness by giving it a free constitution, but by giving the whole people mental and moral light. Then, if we would perpetuate our country's happiness and liberty, we must make ourselves intellectual and moral instructors. If we would be *patriotic* citizens, we must be *well-informed, religious men.*

THE END.